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CHRIST AND OUR TIMES

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BY

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CHAPLAIN-IN-ORDINARY TO H.M. THE QUEEN

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TO

The Master, Fellows, and Scholars,

PAST AND PRESENT,

of Balliol College, Oxford,

WITH GRATITUDE AND AFFECTION,

BY A FORMER SCHOLAR.

PREFACE.

The sermons in the present volume extend over a period of seventeen years, and, taken in combination, form an attempt to express, from within the National Church of England as reorganized at the great crisis of the Reformation, the reasonable grounds of belief in the Christian faith, and its application to some of the needs and inquiries of the age.

I wish to take this opportunity of expressing my debts of obligation. In writing "The Voice of Secularism" I had before me a pamphlet illustrating the subject, the name of which I have forgotten. The sermon aims at showing the practical dangers to which Christianity is exposed, when the avowed object of one of the most distinguished politicians of the day (Mr. John Morley) is "gradually to withdraw religion altogether from the notice of mankind." In the discourse on "Difficulties in Inspiration" I had the great advantage of reference to a brilliant series of papers on the question by Archdeacon Farrar in the "Bible Educator," which I have largely quoted or paraphrased in parts. In connection with "Faith, not Knowledge" I should like to remind my readers of an admirable book, which was of much use to myself, Mr. Page Roberts' "Law and God." The discourse on "The Living Christ" was suggested by "Locksley

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Hall Sixty Years After," and in the latter part of it I am indebted to a book on which I place a very high value, and which I constantly read and quote, Brace's "Gesta Christi." In the sermon on "The Spirit from the Father and the Son" an endeavour is made to enforce the historical and practical side of this great mystery. In the last few pages I had in mind some of John Henry Newman's beautiful addresses on the subject.

In "Christ and the Day of Rest" (as in some other sermons) I have obeyed the grave warning of the Bishops at the Lambeth Conference in 1888, who saw in the growing desecration of Sunday a very real peril to English Christianity. For the descriptions of the Rabbinical Sabbath I desire again to express my obligations to Archdeacon Farrar; they are taken from his "Life of Christ."

The book is issued in the hope that it may help to strengthen the faith of some whom the extreme independence and light agility of thought which are amongst the characteristics of our times have loosened from their ancient moorings. To be tossed about on a sea of conflicting opinions, and to have no harbour of rest, can be no great happiness. To the best and greatest of our race Christ has been the true Pilot, and His Word a safe anchorage. That He and it may be such to the whole people of the United Kingdom is the writer's one great wish and prayer.

WILLIAM SINCLAIR.

THURSO CASTLE, CAITHNESS,
22nd September, 1893.

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CHRIST AND MODERN SCEPTICISM.

"There be many that say: Who will show us any good? Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us!"

Psalm iv. 6.

Preached at Quebec Chapel, 1876.

CHRIST AND MODERN SCEPTICISM.

THERE was probably never a more sincere desire than exists at present to realise the whole power of the Gospel and to exterminate all those obstacles within us which hinder the energy of the universal Spirit of God. The infidel immorality of the Georgian era, when it was widely supposed amongst the most cultivated classes that the religion of the Crucified was exploded for ever, has little exact counterpart amongst ourselves. The degradation of the Church of the Stuarts has left no trace or influence except the not unnatural alienation of some of the Christian bodies from the organized expression of the national faith. Times have often been worse than they are now. The bitterest things that can be said against the Gospels have been clearly and carefully enunciated. A hostile critic has summed up the labour of years, and of hundreds of industrious German lives, against the documents of our faith; the worst has been studiously put before us; and it is found that the only result has been a clearing of the atmosphere from those heavily-charged clouds of exaggerated doubts and unexamined surmisings which had caused unreasonable alarm. Sift the documents, said our critics. Their authority has been again examined, and their only condemnation is found to be that they tell us what we are ready to believe.

But, however earnest and confident we may be ourselves, yet outside the circle of hearts which have been touched with the love of Christ, to whom His life has become a principle, and who know the grace of His presence, unbelief is not so quiescent as to permit us to rest in our life-long struggle against the powers and influences that would drag us down from our true level. We are very much bound up with one another; opinion spreads rapidly; few inquire deeply; and the activity of an unbelieving propaganda often means a languid faith among the professed adherents of God manifest in the flesh. It is true, of course, at all times that men can live in the world and by their obtuseness and their preoccupations never have a glimpse of the supreme happiness of seeing God in it. At all times men tend by their concessions and self-deception to weave a curtain for themselves and for their age which takes God away from their horizon. At all times men are inclined to live in the semblance of a complete world of their own, a world that is repeated day after day with perpetual variations but always within the same limits; and in their intercourse with each other even Christians are apt to recognise nothing but this framework of their society, their actions, their motives. But in the present age there is something more than this common and usual abstraction of God from daily life against which we have to contend. The antagonism to Christ may no longer be so much the enmity of deliberate viciousness. Such a movement is essentially self-destructive and must necessarily end in reaction. The power of Christ's presence in this generation and in this country is so great that, in spite of hindrances from within His visible Body as well as from without, it has led the

people unconsciously as well as consciously to a point where open rebellion to the law of God is not tolerated. Our danger rather lies in the honoured recognition at the most powerful centres of intelligent thought, however vague and intangible, of a scientific philosophy which, with a multitude of discordant voices, while availing itself of the morality of the Cross, is gravely dubious about the possibility of a revelation, of eternal life, of the soul, and even of God Himself. It is from here that the question comes to us in every variety of inconsequence and inharmonious negation through literature, through lectures, through magazines, and through newspapers, WHO WILL SHOW US ANY GOOD?

One, not content to know in part or to recognise the obvious limits of every branch of human knowledge, is troubled by the vast size and infinite series of the stellar worlds revealed by astronomy. What is man, he asks, that God should be mindful of *him* amongst all the stately fabrics of countless constellations? Another, going back to the crudest forms of Greek material philosophy, ignoring the fact that beyond a certain point in the far distance of past time the present laws of physical science will not hold, not taking the pains to read or understand all that has been said by the wisest of mankind to establish the supremacy of mental philosophy, is bold enough to fancy innumerable original atoms of matter each instinct with the divine power of producing all the splendid drama of human life and the world's history. Another, slurring over the fact that no chemical laboratory has ever produced a living organism, and that, therefore, the secret of life still remains impenetrable, imagines that by skilfully tracing the nerve currents to

the cells of the brain and back again to the members of the body, he has triumphantly proved that there is no such thing as a soul. Neglecting the significant difficulty, that since man first began to record his observations, no tendency has been observed towards the spontaneous development of a single new species of animal or plant, another, however averse to the conclusion himself, leads his unquestioning followers to maintain that there is nothing in man which could not in the lapse of time be evolved from the lower forms of creation without the aid of a Creator. To assert the superiority of his own most dismal and immoral decree of annihilation, another of our infallible dogmatists is compelled to adopt for his opponent a base travesty of the lowest forms of ignorant superstition, and thus deludes himself with the fallacy that the ridicule which he pours on the scarecrow he has himself created, has destroyed the reasonableness of the Christian revelation. And behind them there is a crowd who, like the Ultramontane disciples of the Pope, accept their guesses as indisputable conclusions, and, with the gregarious obsequiousness of a herd, pass about their sayings as a logical and progressive system, however slight may be their mutual coherence.

Many of these men have made great discoveries in science, and own names that are widely honoured by that recognition which Christian society always gives to patient research. But on that account to offer greater credit to their opinion in unfolding the mysteries of human life would be in the highest degree fallacious. By sharpening their faculties to the minuteness of microscopes, and directing their intelligence to one small branch of investigation, is there no danger

lest their power of general reasoning, their capacity for seeing the mutual interdependence of moral and physical questions, and the absolute superiority of the former, may not be equally developed? Breathing the atmosphere of Christianity, surrounded by the institutions to which it has given birth, they do not see that all our civilisation rests, with myriad changes, on two indissoluble piers, God and the soul. Unconscious of their debt to its hidden spirit, each new instructor has some new recipe for universal happiness. They fancy that their own particular formula, so useful in their special line of discovery, is the new secret for which mankind has been panting, applicable to all the depths of the mysteries with which you and I are surrounded. They claim for their hypotheses, on which their investigations depend but which they cannot prove, and which have time after time replaced other and equally respectable hypotheses, an infallible and unchanging certainty. Accustomed to reason in their laboratories from experimental evidence, they forget on the one hand that the ultimate laws on which their inductions are grounded admit themselves of no demonstration, that gravitation and electricity and conservation of energy and the indestructibility of matter are mere names for what cannot be explained; and on the other hand they forget that when they have resolved every compound, and tabulated the qualities of every chemical element, and calculated the distance of every star, and traced every atom through all its progressive changes, there still remain things diviner than the marvels of any experimental science; there remains the inexplicable human soul, with its infinite capabilities, the one factor in their calculations of which

nothing can be predicted; the fitness of all things in one divine order which, to an unprejudiced mind, surely speaks of the Almighty, and the dignity of perfect human love. It is because they cramp their minds to an experimental instead of a rational logic, and because they expect their physical suppositions to stand good for all the difficulties of existence, and because they have deformed their mental vision by interminable crouching over analysis, that they put beyond their narrow horizon the meaning of these transcendent considerations.

And all the time the men who have listened to them are asking, not in the tone of cynicism, but with a voice of serious earnest, Who will show us any good? And if once the gospel of scepticism travelled widely in the country, the question would come up in a roar of disquietude, What have you great prophets of science to tell us that will make up for our miseries, our disappointments, our sorrows, and our sins? You who refuse to recognise any region but what you can penetrate with your instruments, and say that your physical observations in your studies have convinced you that the miracles for which the Apostles died are a delusion, that Christ had no message, and that there is no immortal soul, and no God; what in the name of mortal wretchedness is it that you have to say to us? If this world is all, and if we choose to assert that living for the flesh, and for ourselves, and without law, gives us more pleasure than a life of self-restraint and unselfishness, who is to disprove it, and with what motive can you supply us that we should do otherwise? The Christian indeed lives for God; but if with our last breath there is an end of us, why should we live according to the Christian delusion?

Conscious of such questions, and urged by the appeal to the example of France, which has had no peace since the Convention decreed the *déchéance* of the Deity, they reply with an equivocation which cannot deceive even the most simple, "But we have a religion, the religion of humanity. And we have an ethical system, the scheme of utility. And we have an immortality, the endless effects of what men have done in life." What is the importance to the masses of this religion which reveals nothing, which has no authority, no sanctions, no promises, no hope but annihilation? How would such a religion proceed in raising their lives above indulgence? Or what result can come from an ethical system which begins by telling man he is selfish? And what sense is there in an immortality in which you can personally have no share? What explanation can be given of the phenomena of human life by such meaningless phrases as these?

For all schemes which limit their scope to present existence have had fair trial not only in the States of classical history, but in the mother of modern revolutions. Have they succeeded in their plans of regeneration? Have their votaries been tolerant of the enormities which they entailed? Has not their only issue been the elimination of every steady element of progress? Facts are not changed by clever schemes. Sin is still sin for atheist as well as for Christian, and brings its own penalties. The inequalities in the distribution of happiness accompany the fairest schemes of socialism as well as the political growths of centuries, and for all but those minds which have the perfect peace of being stayed on God must work ambition and discontent and moral disorder. The deeper questions of human nature remain behind to be

answered—What is my duty, and why must I do it? Where do I come from, and whither am I going? What is the meaning of all that I see around me? How is happiness to be best attained, and who is to measure it for me? Why, in spite of the phenomena of death, am I and all mankind filled with longing for indefinite progress in knowledge and holiness?

Through the shrouding mist of the errors, uncertainties and incongruities which we have been contemplating, glances clearer than ever the light of Him whose sun shineth on the evil and the unthankful, although they do not see it. Not only do we find God in creation as well as in history, in the present as well as in the past, in what we see as well as in what we hear, but we are forced to acknowledge Him whether we will or no. Even the most sceptical of philosophers disappoints the negative expectations of his adherents by the confessions and speculations of his posthumous essays.* No theory, however imaginative, is adequate to account for the grandeur of nature, the fitness and harmonies of things, the gradations of services throughout the universe, the heights as well as the depths of human capacities and characters, which does not base itself on the love of an all-wise Father. And when the soul is brought face to face with the august conception of the Almighty, the conviction flashes upon it that this can be no capricious invention of human imagination; and it cries, "Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts."

Content before this glorious vision to confess our ignorance of many things, we yet find it impossible to

* J. S. Mill.

suppose that when the breath of God is seen stirring in all creation, He would not balance man's special and crowning responsibility of reason and the choice of good and evil with some special assistance towards regaining his true level when he had lost it; yet, remembering that if rebellion received a free pardon there would be a universal encouragement to disobedience, we see that sin must in some way incur its penalty. If, then, we notice that into every relation of life the principle of suffering for others and the idea of substitution enter; if we remind ourselves that our highest idea of generosity is complete self-sacrifice; if we with ordinary candour examine the Hebrew Scriptures and prophecies; if we see, as we must, that not only the Jewish religion but the whole Gentile world was looking for a Saviour; if we consider that for men to know God's purposes there must be a human voice and a human time—a human voice, that the new teaching should be expressed in ideas and language which could take root in the contemporary age—a human time, when an unique conjuncture of circumstances might supply the fitting framework to the message; if, then, we find the messenger of a character which in spite of shame and rejection has forced itself on a vast part of the world as more than human; if we find His words embodying, indeed, for the sake of His hearers, the ideas of the Hebrew religion and wisdom, yet turning them all to gold by their combination with the new treasures of the kingdom of heaven and by his utterly new spiritual method giving them an universal and unlimited application; if we find His authority declared by signs suited indeed to His race, but clothed each of them by His divine presence with a distinct moral aspect, and in defence of which timid men not only laid

down their lives but passed years of physical misery rather than be silent; if we find all this set down in four artless narratives, the apparent discrepancies of which on closer inspection only prove their unstudied harmony; if every fresh attack on the authenticity of these documents only shows their antiquity to be in closer accordance with the early Christian historian; if the indisputable letters of a great Apostle convince us that he had before him, written or unwritten, the very same facts and sayings which are before us; if we find the new revelation, hateful as it was to the current genius of Jew, Greek, and Roman alike, spreading in all directions with the marvellous rapidity of innate truth, not with the ephemeral blaze of a popular delusion, but with the steady silent progress of moral conquest; in spite of scorn and obloquy, fire and sword, and hindrances and corruptions from within as well as from without; which breathes all that is excellent into our civilisation, and from which not even its supposed antagonists can escape; if we still meet with a living witness in the ideal that animates the Christian bodies, to which only human entanglements prevent them from attaining; then no speculations about the magnitude of the stars, no lamentations over the seeming sternness and carelessness of nature, no formula of the laboratory, no theory of evolution or the conservation of energy, can separate us from the love of the Father which is in Christ Jesus our Lord; we are compelled to confess, Truly this man was the Son of God.

Lastly, we find that the appeal of the Christian faith to the true and innermost self awakens echoes there which nothing else can rouse, raises man to a development of godlike proportions near which no other type of character can approach, does not, like the schemes of

the men of science, apply only to the highly-educated few, but kindles as pure a fire in the humblest as in the noblest intelligences, embraces in itself all the good and beautiful thoughts of all other religions and philosophies which were but prophecies of itself, breakings as it were of the universal Spirit of God through the darkness. Then, again, not because we were born in a particular country, for the sceptics show in their own persons that belief is not a necessary consequence of our race, but because the truth has made itself felt within us, we bow the knee before the name of Jesus in the new delight of the woman of Samaria, and with an awakened conscience say, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did : Is NOT THIS THE CHRIST?"

"Lord, lift up the light of Thy countenance upon us!" "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life!" Safe in the clefts of the rock of God's providence, again and again we see the glory of the Lord pass by. To others, from the point where they have placed themselves, all things may seem wrapped in an impenetrable mist, and they may occupy their faculties in scrutinising the pebbles and moss which lie at their feet; for ourselves, nothing can come within our range of vision which is not warmed and enlightened by some of the rays of the divine wisdom. Before us and around us stretches in vanishing perspective the ocean of eternity, in which there is not a ripple that does not reflect the divine wisdom. In our landscape every science, all philosophies, take their proper character as, so far, rifts in the cloud of ignorance which allow us to see here and there a part of our earthly continent in something like its true proportions.

And for ourselves, looking up to God as a man looks

into the eyes of his friend, feeling daily a greater security against our passions through the development of each into the highest virtue, conquering day by day our selfishness by the pure satisfaction of working for others through the motives which the love and the fear of God alone supply, clearing up all bewilderment in the trustful humility of faith, expelling despair and gloom and contempt and listlessness and cynicism and irony by habits of a hope and a charity that grow ever deeper and wider, we feel the tranquillity of sharing in a life which is higher than our own because it is divine.

And if at times we are weary and fall back, yet there are always others to help us on—

> "On to the bound of the waste,
> On to the City of God."

And however weak we may be, God is always ready to give us pure draughts of joy in victory begun and in some degree realised over sin and self, in the true liberty of self-command in Christ; He is willing to let us taste the nascent eternal life which stands in the knowledge of Him and of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord; He permits us the belief, which no blindness or incapacity of ours can shake, that all things are working together with Him, and that to us too is entrusted a share in His providence; He teaches us by experience the happiness of giving up all things for His will, the will of absolute perfection, and for the privilege of being its instruments; He crowns us with the hope of an ennobling expansion in the inheritance bought for us by Christ, of which the gate of death is but the earnest; "we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is."

THE VOICE OF SECULARISM.

"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you."
1 *John* iii. 13.

Preached at St. Paul's Cathedral, 1891.

THE VOICE OF SECULARISM.

THERE is a very bracing and invigorating effect in these days for the faith of those who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ and His kingdom, in the fact that many who are indifferent to religion are not now content to leave it alone, but constantly labour to thwart its influence and to drive it from its hold on the people. The spirit of the world is characterized by a distinct movement. We are not obliged to say hard things about these opponents, because for the most part their conduct is actuated by the moral atmosphere which has been breathed into our national life by fourteen centuries of Christian teaching in the country. Many of them are indeed so able and so estimable that we regret with unaffected sincerity that they do not acknowledge that the kingdom of heaven is among men. In many cases they have been alienated by the intolerance, the imperfections, the pedantry, the narrowness of those Christians whose conduct or principles they have had the misfortune to have most opportunity of observing. They have been by nature of a disposition to notice these weaknesses, and not to see so clearly the beauty of the Christian ideal, and the necessity of the grounds on which it rests. Their tendency has been to be struck by the difficulties and limitations which surround belief, and not by the critical, historical,

and moral strength of its position. They have become animated by a genuine earnest dislike of faith altogether. While we lament their hostility, we can thoroughly respect their sincerity. At all periods in the history of the Christian Church we are prepared by St. John to expect opposition on the part of the world. "Marvel not, my brethren," he said, in his clear, terse, blunt, uncompromising way, "if the world hate you." We are only sorry that able men of great public spirit are blind to the glory of Him who is to us the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

From the character and position of those who dislike faith, it is the practical rather than the theoretical side of the opposition which now engages most attention. And it goes by the title of Secularism.

Secularism is a name which has come into use in recent years. It is derived from an old Latin word in an ecclesiastical usage—*sæculum*, meaning the age, or the world. The old Church writers employed it to mean all that was opposed to God and His Church, in the sense that we have in our Bibles, in the Epistles of St. John: "Love not the world." "All that is in the world is not of God." Secularism has boldly taken this application to itself. It is as if it said to us, "You speak about the world as opposed to God. Well, we are the world. We agree that it is opposed to God. We are opposed to God as you understand His nature. We are opposed to the Church, and all its ways and works. The world, which you condemn, is our delight. We shape our system of thought and action to suit it, and it alone. We think only of the things of this life. We confine our view solely to what we know. Theology is nothing to us. We care only for practical life.

and the measures that must be taken to insure worldly success. We are not the least concerned about the future. We are of the world. We are Secularists."

It is important to remember that Secularism is not necessarily Atheism. Its supporters may be Atheists, they may be Agnostics, they may be Positivists, they may be infidels, they may be even nominal Christians, they may be those who are not interested in any of these things. Atheists, as we all know, are those who say positively and distinctly that there is no God. Agnostics are those who say it is impossible to decide whether there is a God or not. Positivists are those who say they will have nothing to do with anything which they cannot prove with mathematical demonstration, and who have invented for themselves a highly artificial system, the Religion of Human Nature. Infidels are those who deny the Christian faith; *faithless* is the literal meaning of the word; they may be Deists or those who believe in a personal God, or they may be Theists, those who believe in some divine essence or power. Of nominal Christians, who are under the power of this spirit of the world, there are many about us in every place whom no thought of God, or truth, or duty ever influences, but who act on mere party words, passions, and influences. What all these have in common is that they are Secularists; they are, at any rate, cold to religion; they only care to move or interest themselves in what is of this world, of this life, of this earth; they shut out God, revelation, divine truth, the immortality of the soul, the future life from all their thoughts, proceedings, and calculations. Secularism is infidelity applied to practical and social affairs. Its object could not be better put than by its

chief exponent in literature and public life. That exponent says that his object is "gradually to withdraw religion altogether from the notice of mankind, and to make everybody alike think only of the material concerns of this earth." Secularism is thus the active or practical side of scepticism.

From this description of the Secularist spirit it will be seen that it does not imply a very distinctly organized body. It has nothing to bind its people together except negations, and hostility to existing institutions and ideas. To have controversy with it is not very easy, because if you endeavour to expose what you believe to be the fallacies of a Secularist who is an Atheist, some other Secularists may say that on some particular points they do not agree with him. It is a tendency rather than a sect. Its ideas spread more widely often than the personal influence or names of its adherents. Many men who would disagree totally with its aims if they knew them, think there is something popular and manly about its acts. But in general you may take the adherents of Secularism as those who, for whatever reasons, desire to exclude religion, religious motives, and religious institutions from having any influence on human affairs.

In dealing with Secularism we must remember that its supporters are necessarily a very aggressive body. Holding, as their leaders in the main hold, that all religions are false, that all religious people are superstitious, and all religious institutions mischievous, they do not leave them alone, but use every means in their power to weaken and discredit their influence. It is the old conflict between the Church and the world, between the Lord Jesus Christ and what St. Paul

would call the prince of the power of the air. They have a very energetic propaganda. They have a publishing institution from which thousands of pamphlets go into almost every large workshop in London and the provinces. One of their leaders says: "I try to make more Atheists every day, and I have some satisfaction in believing that my efforts are not entirely unsuccessful." Hundreds of thousands of workingmen in London and in the provinces take such words for the voice of their prophet, and glory in the idea that there is neither God nor spirit. Secularism, living in the midst of the kingdom of Christ, mixes up a large amount of what is good, of real social progress, in its publications, with its own dismal principles, and has a way of assuming that the one depends on the other; so that its teachings are supported with enthusiasm by powerful organizations of those who care, perhaps, more for its political principles than for its negations, but who take the one with the other. This is what we have to face.

Now, we ourselves are believers. We find it, with the overwhelming majority of people in this country, far more natural and reasonable to agree with almost the whole of mankind in all ages that there is a Divine Creator, antecedent to all things, rather than to hold the impossible theory that either all things have existed from all eternity, or that they came into being by mere chance. We make a great difference between believing and knowing. Believing is holding a probable opinion about things which are incapable of proof, but which affect in the most serious way possible our condition and our conduct; knowing is having scientific and mathematic certainty. We believe that

as God created us, it is likely He would not leave us entirely to ourselves without guidance or teaching.

We believe that we have the history of that guidance and teaching in the marvellous collection of literature which is now reverenced in all parts of the world as the Bible. We believe that this revelation was made in different and growing degrees of clearness, according to the intellectual and moral condition of the race, till it culminated in the crowning and unique figure of the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that this revelation was given through ordinary men, who might not be beyond their age on matters of history, philosophy, or science, but who were inspired to teach to their different generations moral and religious truth. We believe that this marvellous literature, to which none of the other sacred books of the world can reasonably be compared, may be divided into two great parts, one of them looking forward and the other looking backward to the unique figure of the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that the wonderful series of ancient Hebrew prophecies, extending over more than one thousand years, were fulfilled in His divine person. We believe that in commissioning the different heroes of faith to deliver their message of example and teaching each to his own generation, there would be nothing in the least improbable in the Author of Nature giving them power to do things which ordinary men could not do. We believe that when the Son of God Himself came at last to give the final revelation of the will of the Father, it would have been quite impossible that He should not show forth His divine nature by His miraculous powers, and by the wisdom and restraint with which He used them. We believe that the whole

Old Testament teaches the nature of sin as rebellion against the wise will of God for our good, the necessity of repentance, and the necessity of atonement for and reformation of ourselves, of the warning all who shall come after us, and of all the other hosts of beings throughout the boundless universe which God has created and made. We believe that but for such atonement rebellion against His all-wise will might become more frequent. We believe we see a witness to this principle of atonement not only in the instructive system of sacrifices instituted by the Law of Moses, but also in the instinct of propitiatory oblation which appears in the history of all nations alike. This atonement we believe to have been consummated by the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world on the Cross of Calvary. We believe that as God has created human life, which in itself is so beautiful and glorious a thing, He, being omnipotent, will not throw it away as useless when the breath has departed from the lifeless body. We believe that there is as little difficulty in the spirit living apart from the body in the world of spirits, or the spiritual world, as there is in God Himself existing as a universal Spirit, in whom we all live and move and have our being, without body, parts or passions. We hold that there are abundant grounds for believing that this life is incomplete in itself, seems in a hundred ways to point to its consummation in another world, and is in fact a preparation and a discipline for a future existence. We believe that, as there is a difference between the life of a stone and the life of a plant, as there is a difference between the life of a plant and the life of an animal, as there is a difference between the life of an animal and the life of

a man, so there is a difference between the natural life of a man and his spiritual life, and it is his spiritual life which has here to be developed till it is matured in another world. All this it seems to us more reasonable to hold than that this life is the beginning and the ending of all things.

And it seems to us that our creed is the only motive which can regenerate social life amongst us, and keep it wholesome; whereas the opinions of Secularism must tend to its dissolution. It seems to us, with the great German thinker, Kant, that without belief in God and in the soul there can be no morality. The Secularist says that his morality is tested by what is useful. But who is to decide what is useful? It must either be the community in which the man lives, or, in many cases, the man himself. Well, in the first place, communities are often arbitrary, cruel, and tyrannical; mobs are often swayed by passion; nothing could be more dangerous and foolish than to leave the decision of what ought or ought not to be done to mere fluctuating representative institutions. But in the second place, if a man has to decide in many cases for himself what is useful, how can we be sure that he will decide right? Having, by his own profession, no fear of God before his eyes, or of judgment to come, or of responsibility for his actions to his Maker, there is nothing except the fear of the policeman or his own varying ideal to prevent him from deciding by what he likes best at the moment himself; and so by passion, appetite, and lust. Conscience must disappear, and we should inevitably be led in the end to fear nothing, to shrink from nothing, except being found out. We know already what a fatal effect Atheistic

Secularism has had on its supporters, even though they live in the midst of a Christian society, and are to some extent still affected by its traditions.

To take only one example; we know that amongst them the terrible doctrine is taught that true marriage exists only as long as man and woman choose to say that they love each other, and no longer. What a bribe is offered here to human lust, and to perpetual change and variety! We know that amongst them it is denied that there is any such thing as sin; no act is to be measured by any other standard than whether it is useful. Under such a system how could it be shown that murder, adultery, fornication, theft, slander, lying, covetousness, might not at times be considered useful by the community, frequently by the individual? Would not all those evil forces which we call sins and vices be let loose, to the ruin of the individual, and the destruction of society? Atheistic Secularism makes a great point of being allowed to affirm, and it justifies much of its hostility to existing institutions by the reluctance with which this right has been conceded in the past, and with which it is sometimes granted now. But how, under such circumstances, and with such slight sanctions, and in such an absence of a uniform overwhelming motive, can they prove that the affirmation of large masses shall be entitled to implicit confidence? Might not the Atheistic Secularist be frequently persuaded that it is useful to conceal or to deny the truth? It is, no doubt, painful to bring home both to ourselves and to our opponents the enormous moral difference which exists between the Secularist and the Christian. No doubt it is difficult to realise how completely the existing Secularists are dependent for their scruples

and their good conduct on the prevalence about them of the atmosphere of Christianity. But with an active, aggressive body, who associate with their opinions much that is popular and palatable to the multitude, we must recognise these facts without shrinking or hesitation.

So much for their position, intellectual and moral. I have said that Secularism avows its wish gradually to withdraw religion from public attention, until the people and the nation cease to be occupied with anything except the affairs of the world. As easily might you try with a broom to sweep back the Atlantic! Whatever theorists may say, the heart of man will always turn in awe and confidence to his Creator. But in the meantime, unless Christian people are on the alert, much mischief may be done by crushing the proper influence of religion and religious people. And yet we know that religious and moral principles and influences are the real salt of the earth, the real light of the world, the real forces which keep our community healthy and prosperous.

The tendency to act in a secular spirit, and to deny its proper place to religion and religious institutions, has been growing during the last sixty years. Let us recall a few instances. The army and the navy are old institutions; in them religion is recognised; they have their chaplains of all denominations, their regular church parades and services. Who can say how much of the excellent behaviour of both these great services is not owing to this wholesome fact? But another admirable institution, that of the police, has been founded under the modern Secularist spirit. Most individual constables are doubtless eminently good

men, and seek out places of worship for themselves. But the institution itself makes no recognition of religion. As a body it has no church worship. Unless arrangements should be made for their benefit, as for the army and the navy, it is very difficult for them to cultivate religious duties at all. They are a noble and admirable set of men who, by the rules of their institution, are being withdrawn, as Secularism wishes, from the influences of religion.

Look again at elementary education. We all believe that it is most important that the deficiencies of home life should be made up in our elementary schools, and the characters of the children moulded as far as possible by religious influences. Twenty-three years ago the principle of the Queen's Government was to help all religious schools alike. And at first, when the increase of population made her Government wish to do more, the Queen's ministers intended to continue something of the same kind on a larger scale. But the Secularist spirit interfered, and the result was the denial of all the old help to the religious schools except what they can themselves earn, and the inauguration of a new system, under which it has to be decided every three years by the ratepayers whether the children may have any religious teaching at all or not. That is what makes the Secularists so excessively active at every school board election. They see what an enormous boon it would be to them to capture the four hundred board schools of London, and to be able to appoint Secularist masters and mistresses, and to deny religious teaching to four hundred thousand children. That is what makes some men so anxious to uproot all the religious denominational schools. As long as nearly two

hundred thousand children in London are in the voluntary schools, and are taught and trained on religious principles, so long will the parents insist that something of the same kind should be done for the four hundred thousand board school children. But directly the example of the voluntary schools was destroyed, it would be much easier to secularise the board schools.

That is what makes us so anxious ourselves at every school board election to defend our voluntary schools: not to uphold the influence of the mere minister of the Church, but to maintain the power and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to ensure that at any rate to our Church children shall continue to be taught the glorious old formulas of the "Duty to my God" and the "Duty to my Neighbour." The unthinking adherents of that tendency are so inexperienced that they fancy that the old wholesome religious characters will be produced without the teaching of the old wholesome religious principles and duties. And you will find this same spirit penetrating wherever any new movement is proposed, or wherever any old institution is remodelled. The State is urged to forget that the ancient national Church is still its religious side, its religious function, its religious arm, and that it must be a terrible loss to the people if, through the just and righteous desire of being courteous and fair to smaller bodies, the Government of the country should go so far as not to use that religious side, that religious function, that religious arm at all. You will find that, under the influence of the Secularist spirit, it is a common catchword of the present day that everything should be undenominational. Now, undenominational is a very clever word to use, because it sounds so fair and equal. But

undenominationalism in its practical application means that the religious side of the State is to be silent and to be left out, and that everybody else is to be heard in preference. Or else it must mean that there is little or no religious influence worth the name to be recognised at all. Christianity cannot help being in some degree denominational. Undenominationalism is a deceptive and fallacious word, and it is desirable at all times and in all circumstances that everybody should see plainly what they are about. When you have adopted an undenominational scheme or plan, you have gone far to place it under the spirit of Secularism; and that spirit will not fail to know how to take advantage of your weakness.

These are some of the reasons why we think that we should not encourage the proposal that religion should be gradually withdrawn from the notice of the people until they only concern themselves with the material concerns of this earth. In making our inquiry into this powerful force of our modern life, we have been engaged in what is neither idle, uncharitable, nor injudicious. To recognise the movements and tendencies which we have to meet is one of the elementary duties of the Christian warfare. "Beloved, try the spirits," says St. John. But the weapons of that warfare are not the arms of this life or the missiles of the world. Railing accusation and careless misrepresentation will only recoil upon ourselves. It is by patient continuance in well-doing, by showing in our life and conduct in all humility the better way, by praying daily that the spirit of the Father and the Son may in all things and in every relation direct and rule our hearts, that we shall best win the field for the Lord. It is by quiet and reasonable

argument, by good-tempered and respectful appeals to justice and to history, by friendly remonstrance and undisturbed self-possession that we shall best uphold the standard of religious principle in every department of our corporate life.

It is not for the mere supremacy of the Church itself that we urge these things, nor for the authority of this or that ecclesiastical person; we should be just as anxious that the common religious principles which we share with others should be loyally and courageously maintained by themselves. It is because it is the standard of right and duty, and love of goodness, which is God, and the love of our neighbour, which is His nature and His will. It is because it is the standard for which the martyrs died, which our fathers loved, which has given us our civilisation, and made us a wise and understanding people. It is by earnestly, persistently, zealously, and with energetic self-denial dropping our own differences that we shall best unite the people of this country, which should be the aim of every loyal citizen. Do not let us, through our idle jealousies and petty suspicions of each other, allow that divine standard to droop to the ground, in any infatuated confidence in or obedience to the far-sighted challenge of the enemies of our faith!

DIFFICULTIES IN INSPIRATION.

"All Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable also for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."
2 *Timothy* iii. 16.

Preached at St. Stephen's Church, Westminster,
Sunday, October 21st, 1888.

DIFFICULTIES IN INSPIRATION.

GREAT difficulty has been needlessly placed in the way of reasonable belief by expecting from revelation a preciseness to which it does not itself lay claim. Men have refused to recognise the human element in the divine Word; and when that human element has been forced on their notice, they have sometimes been unable to extricate their thoughts about religion from the prejudices which they had formed about it, and have recoiled so far from their previous position as to give up any idea of a special divine communication at all.

For this mistake there is little excuse. Ample warning was given against it by Bishop Butler:—"These observations, relating to the whole of Christianity, are applicable to inspiration in particular. As we are in no sort judges beforehand, by what laws or rules, in what degree, or by what means it were to have been expected that God would naturally instruct us, so upon supposition of His affording us light and instruction by revelation, additional to what He has afforded us by reason and experience, we are in no sort judges by what methods, and in what proportion it were to be expected that this supernatural light and instruction would be afforded us. . . . We are wholly

ignorant what degree of new knowledge it were to be expected God would give mankind by revelation, upon supposition of His affording one; or how far, or in what way He would interpose miraculously to qualify them, to whom He should originally make the revelation for communicating the knowledge given by it; and to secure their doing it to the age in which they should live; and to secure its being transmitted to posterity. We are equally ignorant whether the evidence of it would be certain, or highly probable, or doubtful; or whether all who should have any degree of instruction from it, and any degree of evidence of its truth would have the same; or whether the scheme would be revealed at once or unfolded gradually. Nay, we are not in any sort able to judge whether it were to have been expected that the revelation should have been committed to writing or left to be handed down, and consequently corrupted by verbal tradition, and at length sunk under it, if mankind so pleased, and during such time as they are permitted, in the degree they evidently are, to act at will." *

A similar caution is given by Paley with regard to the expectation of too great scientific preciseness in the New Testament, which applies with no less force to the Old:—"Separate what was the object of the Apostolic mission, and declared by them to be so, from what was extraneous to it, or only incidentally connected with it. . . . Secondly, in reading the Apostolic writings, we distinguish between their doctrines and their arguments. Their doctrines came to them by revelation properly so called; yet in propounding these doctrines in their writings or discourses, they were wont to illus-

* Butler's "Analogy," part ii. chap. iii.

trate, support and enforce them by such analogies, arguments, and considerations as their own thought suggested. . . . 'When divine writers agree upon any point, we are always bound to believe the conclusions that their reasonings end in as parts of divine revelation; but we are not bound to be able to make out, or even to assent to, all the premises made use of by them, in their whole extent, unless it plainly appear that they affirm the premises as expressly as they do the conclusions proved by them' (Burnet's 'Expos.,' art. 6)."*

With these two preliminary warnings from our two greatest evidential writers, we will proceed at once to investigate St. Paul's doctrine of inspiration in the text.

This is one of those places where the reading of the Revised Version is of importance. Our revised translation follows two of the most ancient witnesses to the meaning of the original Greek text, the Syriac version, and the Latin version. It is also followed by Dean Alford of Canterbury, Bishop Ellicott of Gloucester, and Bishop Wordsworth of Lincoln. It is as follows:—"Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." St. Paul has been warning Timothy against evil men, who would wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. He reminds him that he has something to stand by—his knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures. "But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them, and that

* Paley's "Evidences," part iii. chap. ii.

from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." We have no doubt as to what these writings were which Timothy had known since he was a child; they were the same in number as our own Thirty-nine Articles—the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament. And then St. Paul goes on to explain what an inestimable value he puts on these thirty-nine books:—"Every writing inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." The difference between this and the former translation is not very great; it implies just the same that Scripture is inspired. But to tell Timothy that all Scripture was given by inspiration of God would have been nothing new to him; it was a view with which he was familiar from his birth. What St. Paul wanted to remind him was about the use to which he was to put this inspired literature with which he was so well acquainted. He was to use it for four purposes—teaching, reproof, correction, discipline in righteousness; learning, warning, setting right, training.

I want to ask you to consider what you mean by Inspiration. And I venture to hope that, by the grace of the Spirit of God, some of the thoughts which I put before you will be of help to you both in your controversies with infidels, and in those doubts and difficulties which the devil suggests to your own minds amongst his choicest and most effective weapons.

Five different views of inspiration are held at the present moment by different sets of believers within the English Church. I will paraphrase them from

Archdeacon Farrar's articles in the *Biblical Educator*.

First, there is the view of those who hold to literal inspiration. It has also been called the mechanical or dictation theory. Those who hold it believe that "every sentence, every word, every syllable, every letter, every vowel-point of Scripture has been sent straight from God." They believe that the authors of the various books had no share in the composition; "they were not only the penmen but the pens of the Holy Spirit." Does not this exacting view remind us of the manner in which the Scribes and Pharisees treated the Old Testament in the days of our Lord; twisting each sentence into some tremendous meaning, and exciting His unceasing indignation? It was against this literal spirit that He exclaimed when He said, "It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing." This view has brooded like a nightmare over many minds since the days of Quenstedt, Voetius, and Calovius. Dark are the shadows which it has cast, and bitter the tortures of soul which by its insuperable difficulties it has excited. In trying to do honour to God and to His Word, these insatiable persons have surely succeeded in restoring the yoke which the Pharisees bound round the necks of the people of God and which they were unable to bear. "The letter killeth," said St. Paul; "the spirit giveth life."

Surely it was an untrue doctrine which set lists of the Dukes of Edom or the dry genealogies of the Book of Chronicles on the same level as the Psalms of David or the prophecies of Isaiah. I knew an excellent lady who tormented herself and all her friends by learning a little Hebrew and trying to

make out that every one of the hundreds of names in these ancient Hebrew pedigrees of the Books of Chronicles had a high spiritual meaning. Surely it was an untrue and fatal view which refused to distinguish between what was accidental and local from what was moral and spiritual. Surely it was a blasphemous and fatal view which supposed that the Bible was meant to teach men science, and that the compilers who wrote down the annals of the ancient Hebrews were instructed in every point of geology, zoology, geography, history, astronomy, botany, mineralogy, and chemistry, beyond possibility of mistake or need of research. Not so St. Paul. For what purpose does he say Scripture was given? For doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

The second view of inspiration held by believers in the English Church is the general view. It holds (I am again paraphrasing from Dr. Farrar) that Holy Scripture was not dictated by, but was committed to writing under the guidance of, the Holy Spirit. While recognising the divine influence, it does not do away with human co-operation. The truths are inspired by the Holy Spirit, the words and phrases are the result of the writer's own character; the material is from God; the form is from man. There may be weaknesses and imperfections in the mode of expression; there can be none in the truth revealed. The books of Scripture, though not dictated, are yet perfectly accurate in the minutest particular. This view is much more in accordance with the teaching of the Bible itself than the other. It will be a great comfort and help to those who hold it. Still, in my own judgment, it is not yet the view which is most in accordance with the facts of the case.

The third view is that of illumination. It insists that there are degrees of inspiration. Sometimes the illumination becomes exceedingly faint and unimportant; sometimes it shines with incomparable brightness. In the mere historical books, the Kings, Chronicles, Esther, and the like, the illumination may not be very strong. In the history of the Patriarchs, in the law of Moses, in the life of David, in the wise sayings of Solomon, in the types and prophecies of the Messiah, in the fervour of the Psalms, in the meditations of Job, the illumination would be in varying amounts fuller and more complete. An illustration of this view would be the progressive morality of the Old Testament. In the Old Testament David was allowed to curse his enemies. In the New he would be told to bless them. In the Old Testament the saints were allowed to have as many wives as they pleased. In the New they are taught the sacredness of the single tie. This view was held by some of the wiser amongst the Jews themselves. They divided the Scriptures into the law, the prophets, and the sacred writings; and again they distinguished between the Prophetic Spirit which inspired the law and the prophets, and the Holy Spirit which suggested words and thoughts not beyond the attainment of the wisest and best of men.

The fourth is the view which I myself hold, and which I believe to be the plain intention of the Word of God itself. It is the view of Essential Inspiration; that is, that in all essential matters the writers both of the Old and New Testament were guided and inspired by the Holy Spirit of God to write down the truth, and nothing but the truth. We say that the Bible contains the Word of God. We believe that the Holy

Scriptures are the record of a divine revelation, and that the writers were inspired by the Holy Spirit, but we believe that this inspiration was never intended to go beyond matters of doctrine, matters of morality, and, above all, matters of faith. The accidental allusions, the passing phrases of the writers may, perhaps, not be of the slightest concern to us. We do not believe that the holy writers would have wished us to attach the slightest importance to accuracy or inaccuracy in popular expressions about facts of nature. This is the view of the most learned theologian at the time of the Reformation, Erasmus. This is the view of the most learned theologian of our own times, the Old Catholic Dr. Döllinger. It has the sanction of some of the best theologians of the English Church, men of unimpeachable orthodoxy—Bishop Lowth, Bishop Warburton, Archdeacon Paley, Dr. Clarke; the Nonconformists, Doddridge and Baxter; the Evangelical Archbishop Sumner, the Evangelical commentator, Thomas Scott.

There remains one more view, which is to me most unsatisfactory, because it goes too far in the opposite direction. It has been called the view of Ordinary Inspiration. The other four may differ in the extent to which they apply the working of inspiration; but they all agree in considering it something extraordinary, beyond human understanding, beyond natural operation. The fifth view, which is that generally held by those who are called Broad Churchmen, regards the inspiration of Scripture as in nowise different from the inspiration of all good men. "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit." They use the word in exactly the same sense in both cases. They believe that our Lord came

to reveal and declare His Father to mankind, and that the New Testament contains the truthful record of His life, His death, and the doctrine which He taught. Beyond this they think the Bible a wonderful book, full of wisdom and goodness, and everywhere appealing to the religious sense in men, but they do not set it apart from other good books. They think little of prophecy or miracle. Such a theory, if widely accepted, would soon go far to bringing down our ideas of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself to the mere level of the best of men. This theory cannot pretend to be the same as the theory of St. Paul, or of the other New Testament writers, when they quote the Old Testament as authoritative, or describe its books as holy.

The Church of England itself, which is always moderate, wise, and true in all she says, holds neither one extreme nor the other. "The Church of England requires in her ministers a clear and charitable belief that Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation. She defines Holy Scripture to be the undoubtedly canonical books of the Old and New Testament; she makes a passing allusion to God's Word written; she declares that the Old Testament is not contrary to the New, and that in both alike everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ; she requires of her priests and deacons unfeignedly to believe them, and to be persuaded that they contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. The Church of England gives no exclusive sanction to any theory of inspiration." She follows the teaching of St. Paul:—"All Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

The reasonable and scriptural view of the Bible which, following other writers, I have endeavoured to set forth, confirms us more than any other view in our deep reverence for the revelation of God which it contains, and in the inestimable value which we set upon it as the beginning and the end of all wisdom. St. Paul calls the Old Testament the Oracles of God. When the prophets spoke anything specially important, it was the Holy Ghost that spoke by them. St. Peter sets, as we should expect, the highest possible value on prophecy. "The prophecy in old time came, not by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." St. Paul says that he himself taught in words which the Holy Spirit teacheth; in another place he describes his teaching as not being the word of man, but in truth the word of God. He distinguishes between advice which he offered on his own responsibility, and the teachings which he felt to be the suggestion of the Holy Spirit itself. Our Lord Himself appeals to Scripture from the beginning to the end of his ministry. Often in the emphatic words: "It is written"; "Have ye not read?" Nothing more can be wanted to show the vital importance, to everyone who comes within sound of the Gospel, of diligently searching the Scriptures, because we know that in them we have eternal life.

In the Bible we find the Son of God revealed to man, the messenger from the unseen world, the one answer which has been given to all our doubts and perplexities. One half of the Bible describes how He came; the other half tells us how He would come. Type, figure, sacrifice, prophecy, all look forward to the redemption of the world by the Divine Messiah. In both Old and New Testament the histories which we

read and the lives which we contemplate are of value in proportion as they approach His likeness. In this manifold and wondrous light from heaven, there is no passion of the human soul, no weakness or strength of human nature, which does not receive its own special illustration and explanation. In innumerable instances, in what befell patriarch, judge, king, and prophet, Holy Scripture becomes to us profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

Who can possibly measure, even in imagination, the gigantic and stupendous power of one single copy of the Word of God? In that small compass is contained all that it concerns man to know about the Almighty Creator. There is unfolded all that ever has been revealed, and we believe also all that ever will be revealed, until the very end of time. "There never was found," said Bacon, "in any age of the world, either religion or law that did so highly exalt the public good as the Bible." "There is no book extant in any language, or in any country," wrote the learned Bishop Porteus, "which can in any degree be compared with the Bible, for antiquity, for authority, for the importance, the dignity, the varieties, the curiosity of the matter it contains." "If it were possible," exclaimed Everitt, "to annihilate the Bible, and with it all its influences, we should destroy with it the whole spiritual system of the moral world, all refinement of manners, constitutional government, security of property, our schools, hospitals, and benevolent associations, the press, the fine arts, the equality of the sexes, and the blessings of the fireside." "In whatever light we regard the Bible," said Adams, the sixth President of the United States of America, "whether with reference

to revelation, history, or morality, it is an invaluable and inexhaustible mine of knowledge and virtue." "The Bible is a divine encyclopædia in itself," wrote the poet, Henry Kirke White. "The Bible is a power in every government that is ruled by it," said the patriot Kossuth. "The Bible," said Sir William Jones, the great master and explorer of the mystic religions of the East, "contains more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been written."

You know how best to honour the Bible. It is not by vainly expecting it to teach us prematurely every branch of human knowledge. You do not claim to learn from it universal history, philosophy, astronomy, mathematics, geology, botany, zoology, optics, mechanics. St. Paul makes no such assertion. Doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness; these and these alone are what you look for in that marvellous volume. It contains the literature of an inspired people; a people whom God enabled to foresee the coming of His Son on earth, and to write of Him in those wonderful delineations of gospels and epistles when He had appeared. You are not astonished to be continually reminded of the human element through which the divine revelation is conveyed. Even one gospel differs from another in its verbal report; had it been otherwise there need only have been one. The Evangelists themselves are four independent witnesses, filling up and confirming one another, and all contributing their best to the portraiture of the Divine Son of God in the manifold effulgence of his glory.

FAITH, NOT KNOWLEDGE.

"If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know; but if any man love God, the same is known of Him."

1 *Corinthians* viii. 2, 3.

Preached before the University of Oxford, at St. Mary's,
Whit Sunday, 1883.

FAITH, NOT KNOWLEDGE.

HOW often happiness for life has been thrown away by not understanding the difference between scientific knowledge and religious faith, God alone knows. The soul that has been acquiring joyously a hold on things that may be demonstrated expects an equal certainty in the things that concern the mystery of his being, and his future, and the origin and meaning of all which surrounds him. Perhaps he has been told that so it may and should be. He has not been trained to look for profound differences between the region of religion and the conquests of demonstration. Religion, in the imperfect guise which it has been presented to him by those who at their best are imperfect human teachers, has seemed to him to have invaded unwarrantably, perhaps still to be invading, those fields of inquiry and discovery which are dear to him for their clearness and accuracy, and as the scene where his mind has first begun to recognise itself and its own powers. So he has bid farewell to Jesus Christ and the tale of repentance and forgiveness, to the awful hopes and inspiring sanctions of the days of his youth; and by ranging all these things on one side as unknowable in obedient loyalty (as he supposes) to his intellect, thinks that with them he has no further concern.

It is altogether in a different way from this that religion in its postulates and its theory presents itself to us. It tells us that in the strict and technical sense it is unknowable. But far from being a defect, this absence of demonstration is its necessary condition. It is the very notion of our moral discipline that we must in this life walk by faith and not by sight. Were it good for us, God could have convinced the world at once and for ever of His existence, His will and His laws. It was only step by step, little by little, that the Apostles became assured that Jesus of Nazareth was the Word made flesh. The whole New Testament is an appeal to the moral power of belief, not to the satisfaction of intellectual certainty. Often as St. Paul speaks of knowing and knowledge in the region of the spiritual kingdom, it is not of demonstration that he is thinking, but of moral apprehension. He means that moral response to the will of God and to salvation in Christ which through faith can be aroused in the heart by the Divine Spirit, and will issue in love and obedience. When he is thinking of scientific proof he talks of sight and seeing, and contrasts the idea sharply with that of the instruments and methods of faith. We are saved, he says, by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are of time; but the things which are not seen are of eternity. And even at best the ground, the confidence of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen, is but faith. For now we see in a dim mirror,

by aid of a dark discourse in riddling fashion; not till hereafter shall we see face to face. Now I know in part; not till then shall I know even as I am known.

The attitude, then, of the disciple of Jesus, the attitude of the children of God, the attitude of loyal and understanding citizens of the kingdom of heaven, is distinctly not (as men sometimes accuse us of making it) that of a kind of religious and ecclesiastical science. It is the attitude of a mind that will not rest satisfied without the best answer which it can get to its painful searchings: "What am I? Whence am I? Whither do I go? What is my duty?" It is the attitude of a heart that will not be content without a divine ideal to satisfy that conscientiousness which it finds to be the first and greatest fact of its own being. The answer to those searchings, the answer to that yearning, it finds in the history of the Jewish Church and of its Christian development; and to it the most precious of the annals of any country is that one short sentence of the Roman historian which tells how the name of Christianity arose from one Christ who, when Tiberius was emperor, was put to death by Pontius Pilate, the procurator. And when we long for absolute demonstration in support of this our belief, when we are casting about in great grief and trouble to see what we can find in the way of proof which may be good for those who will have nothing to do with the unknowable, then we are led back by these calm undisturbed words of the everlasting Gospel to remember that we are looking for what it is not intended that we should find.

The theory of our religion is that God is subduing our wills to Himself for our settled happi-

ness in the world beyond. Feeble and wayward as our principles and affections are, if we had certainty in our hands in the domain of faith, we should either be paralyzed or made reckless, or deprived of our free-will and forced into obedience. None of these things would be for the glory of God or for the health of our own souls. We are on our trial, and the main point of that probation is that we should exercise a moral choice. We find it impossible for ourselves not to hold that in the revelation of Jesus our Father has set before us life and death. It is for us to determine which we will have, but not to ask for more. This in the great mercy of God is the immense value to us of the character of St. Thomas. This in His loving-kindness was one of the last lessons of our Lord's life, specially recorded for us in the supplemental biography of St. John: "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

When so many friends in their mistaken way have told us that we are dealing unwarrantably with the unknowable, it would be difficult indeed to find words to express our condition of moral adhesion more perfectly or reassuringly than the words of St. Peter. We must indeed believe with our mind as well as our heart; but he speaks not of indisputable knowledge, not of absolute intellectual compulsion, not of the cessation of all mental trial, not of the end of all difficulty, not of mental repose, not of perfect logical proof. He does not say that the end of our faith is scientific demonstration. But what does he say? "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath

begotten us again *unto a lively hope* by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation *ready to be revealed in the last time.* Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season if need be ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: *whom, having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.*" Christians cannot be too often exhorted, both for their own sake and for the sake of others, not to make vain struggles after sight instead of trust. "If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know; but if any man love God, the same is known of Him."

But although this our moral adhesion to the faith of our Lord rests content with a humble trust, and does not ask for complete unquestionable proof, still it does not hang unsupported in mid-air or disclaim the help of evidence. There are many voices which speak to us in confirmation of this supreme and all-embracing supposition of our lives. "Two things," says Kant, "fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the starry heavens above and the moral law within." "*Has* reason any grounds," he asks again, "for believing in, as real, any supreme Power, dealing out happiness and misery according to desert

and guilt, having sway over the whole physical system, and governing the world with the extremest wisdom—that is, to hold that God is? Yes," he answers, "for we discover manifested, in those works of nature we can judge of, the traces of a wisdom so vast and profound, that we can account for it only by ascribing it to the unsearchable skill of a Creator, from whom we deem ourselves entitled to expect a no less admirable adjustment of the world's moral order, which latter is indeed its highest harmony; that is to say, we may one day hope to become partakers of happiness, if we do not, by our forgetfulness of duty, make ourselves unworthy of it." And again he says: —"There may undoubtedly be a doctrine of religion within the limits of pure reason where it is not affirmed that the positions were originated at first by reason, for that might be too much presumption; but that they rest in part on historical documents and the tenets of a revelation." These are some of the voices.

But there are others. There is the marvellous cohesion and unity of the sixty-six books which contain what we believe to be the revelation of God to man. There is the voice of prophecy. We do not know how to account for the visions of the Hebrew seers but as preparations and signs of the Messiah. There is the voice of the moral teaching of the Bible, embracing in itself all that has been ever thought of good in every part of the world's history, and far more and higher. There is the witness of the twelve Apostles, who laid down their lives rather than deny the Resurrection. There is the near and intimate witness of St. Paul. There is the voice of the unique and superhuman majesty of the character of Christ. There is

the witness of the Church in its growth over almost insuperable obstacles from within and from without. There is the witness of history in the fitness of the times. There is the voice of the martyrs. There is the witness of God's saints in every age, in every country, in every town. From all these again we do not claim scientific demonstration, but only a strong ground for the foundations of belief, and the force of manifold concurrent testimonies. We do not want them to help us to know, in the philosophical sense of the word; we are content if they help us to believe.

Some of these are stronger than others. Some appeal more to one mind, some to another. If we are plied with critical difficulties, we answer with the orthodox Paley, that to make Christianity answerable with its life for the circumstantial truth of each separate passage of the whole Old Testament, the entire genuineness of every book, however unimportant, the information, fidelity, and judgment of every writer in it, is to bring, he will not say great, but unnecessary, difficulties, into the whole system. The accuracy and authenticity throughout may be probable, but they are not throughout necessary. If we are asked to point out a true Church of Christ, and are perplexed at finding here diversities of governments, there imperfection of moral results, everywhere some different criterion, we reply in the words of our Lord Himself: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo here! or Lo there! for behold the kingdom of God is within you."

These are some of the voices. But it is not on these that we need now dwell. For this day reminds me of a special voice of its own, which is indeed of all the

most precious and encouraging. To-day we are reminded of the *witness of the Spirit.* It is put by Kant in its most elementary form. "Since He who searches the heart and, having all obligatory power, is able to absolve and condemn, is called God, it follows that conscience must be regarded as a human principle implanted in the reason of man, calling for an account of every action before God. Nay, this notion of responsibility is at all times involved, however darkly, in every act of moral self-consciousness. . . . And mankind is, by means of this idea, from its analogy to that of a sovereign lawgiver of the universe, led to figure to himself conscientiousness (in the old language of the Empire, *religio*) as a responsibility owed to a most holy Being, different from ourselves and yet most intimately present to our substance (moral legislative reason) and to submit ourselves to His will as if it were a law of righteousness." "Historical religion may become," says another writer, "as it often has become, perverted, distorted, exhausted, formalised; its external proofs may to some minds by intellectual warping become doubtful, its inner meaning may in the storms of controversy be overlooked by superficial observers. There have been oftentimes Christians who were not like Christ, a Christianity which had too much that was not the religion of Christ. But as the name of the Father represents to us God in nature, as the name of the Son represents to us God in history, so the name of the Holy Ghost represents to us God in our own hearts and spirits and consciences. This is the still, small voice—stillest and smallest, yet loudest and strongest of all, which takes of the things of the Father and of the Son and shows them unto us. This is the light that lighteth every man which cometh into

the world, but which shines most clearly to them which have the faith of Jesus."

Here again we do not wish to claim scientific demonstration. We cannot label to the world the particular products of the Spirit like the objects of natural philosophy. It would be as bad for us as if we were demonstrably certain that everything we asked for in our prayers would irresistibly follow. But in the sense of moral growth, in the consciousness of sin, in the gradual uprooting and getting rid of folly, in the strengthening of self-control, in the more instinctive perception of right and wrong, in the enlightened sway of conscience, in increasing certainty of the truth as it is in Jesus; in the assurance that we all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being ever so slowly transformed into the same image from glory to glory even as from the Lord the Spirit; in the unconscious development of Christian graces, in the deepening sincerity of our love and obedience to God; in larger capacity to reverence the individual in each member of our race whom we meet; in the utter and entire satisfaction which all our needs find in Christian teaching, whether in the present absolutely or in the present through the future; in the gradual silencing for us of the disturbing voices of the world which would destroy our peace—in all these, and in many other ways, in all humility we rejoice with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

We may be told that this is the crown of our delusions, and that we are only pleased because we are what circumstances have made us. But we have a right to reply that we ourselves have after all been the most important factor in the moulding and combination of those circumstances, and that in us beyond all

doubt the most important factor has from the beginning of the dawn of our intelligence been this conscientiousness, this mute instinctive reference to a tribunal not ourselves, higher than anything we see in the best about us, in one word, divine—the Lord the Spirit. Let it be that we are the creatures of birth, of ancestry, of circumstance; let it be that we are surrounded by uniformities physical and psychical, and that the physical very often dominate and rule the soul. Yet as the chemist, the navigator, the naturalist attain their ends by means of law, which is beyond their power to alter, which they cannot change, but with which they can work in harmony and by so doing produce definite intentional results, so may we. We find ourselves immersed in physical and psychical laws, in accordance with which we act, or from which we diverge. We choose to listen beyond everything else to the voice within us, which enables us to understand and to answer the appeal of the Redeemer, and for that voice we can find no better description than the fellowship of the Father and the Son, the Spirit dwelling in the heart by faith, and leading the soul on from righteousness to righteousness. Such fellowship, such communion, is to feel the heart warmed and purified by something more than a transient enthusiasm, by no foolish heat of superstition, no imaginary ecstasy of unreasoning devotion, no wild exaltation of weak sentimentality, but with a profound confidence that we are on the side of the living God. It is given to the disciple of Christ to hope that, however limited his faculties may be, however unworthy the disposition he has received from his ancestors, whatever faults he may find within himself of temper and of intellect, nevertheless he is ever being born again by the very

Spirit of God. He is as sure as he is of anything that as long as his soul thirsteth after the living God, like as the hart roareth after the waterbrooks, so will he find with himself a well of water springing up with everlasting life.

If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know; but if any man love God, the same is known of Him. Are we not content to leave this where it is left by Scripture; to acknowledge the limitation of our faculties, and the reality of our probation in this thing, and in humble trust to look for all the certainty on the part of God?

If any man love God, the same is known of Him, and He gives us glimpses of this recognition. That the spirit of Christ is abroad in the world is a simple fact that in one sense, at any rate, cannot be denied even by the most determined unbeliever. But in a higher sense to us who hold fast the faith once committed to the saints, it is the Spirit who enables us to realise in whom we have believed. It is the Spirit who, in spite of all our difficulties and discouragements, embarrassments and imperfections, enables us to cry, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." It is the Spirit who, oftentimes in our daily occupation, in the book we have been reading, in the train of thought which has been passing through our minds, kindles in us something better than was there before. When we have been looking at some charm and beauty of nature, and have felt for a time taken out of ourselves, when we have been listening to the grave sentences of the Word of God, or after weariness and trouble have been grateful for the pure tranquillities of home, it is the Spirit who has been passing across our path. When our whole being has been filled with delight at some deed

of courageous unselfishness, or at some character of remarkable wisdom and generosity, or at some life that is more godlike than the lives of most men and women, have we not heard the voice of the Divine Spirit arousing all the warmth of the better part of ourselves? Or when we have gone forth from ourselves in prayer to our Father that seeth in secret, in the morning, or in the evening, or in the daytime when we were about our work, or in the place where men meet to worship God, have we not come back into ourselves calmed, strengthened, refreshed, purified, seeing the light dawning upon us, and the shadows fleeing away, and have we not felt that something divine has been with us? Or when, in some acute grief or bitter disappointment, we have not known where to lay our head, where to bury our sorrow, where to get rid of the numbing load of pain which seemed to be crushing all the life out of us, and then something quiet and tranquil has taught us patience, and we began after a long time to look forwards as well as backwards, and to think that our life after all is not so utterly broken off from those duties and encouragements which made it happy in former days,—at such times have we not been sure, with a trustfulness which nothing will persuade us to relinquish, that the Spirit of God knoweth our downsitting and our uprising; He understandeth our thought afar off; He compasseth our path and our lying down, and is acquainted with all our ways? And though, as far as pure reason is concerned, we are ready to agree with St. Paul that if any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know; still, we have found for ourselves, and nothing shall separate us from our comfort, that if any man love God, the same is known of Him.

HOPE, THE PARTNER OF FAITH.

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul?
And why art thou disquieted within me?
Hope thou in God:
For I shall yet praise Him
Who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

Psalm xlii. 11.

Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral, Sunday, November 6th, 1892.

HOPE, THE PARTNER OF FAITH.

I WISH to speak to you about the great primary Christian virtue of hope, because I do not think that we always keep quite clear in our minds what St. Paul calls the proportion of faith; the relation, that is, of our religious disposition towards the different sides of God's revelation. I am not sure that many of us would have a very clear idea of hope as something distinct from faith; nor, again, why hope is in itself a pressing religious duty. It is natural enough that, amongst all the distractions and confused influences to which our weak and limited intelligences are exposed, we should suffer from this want of the sense of the relative importance of this truth or that. It has always been so in the history of the Christian Church. Sometimes a preponderating attention has been paid to one doctrine, sometimes to another; but the excess has been always to the loss of the general harmony of the whole. At one time, for instance, the humanity of our Lord would be insisted on with an exaggerated emphasis that was detrimental to the apprehension of His Deity. At another time it was the reverse: the Deity seemed to swallow up the humanity. Some insisted so strongly on the unity of God that they seemed to forget the persistent teaching of the Scriptures on the personality of the Holy Spirit. Or, again,

men have been so impressed with the fact that the revelation of the Word of God is divine that they have insisted on the verbal and literal inspiration of every sentence to the exclusion altogether of the human element. At one time they have thought of little else but predestination and original sin; at another they have been absorbed by contemplating the mysteries of the millennium. To another generation everything has appeared to be contained in the great principle of justification by faith; to others again the height of Christian virtue has been the strict observance of the Sabbath. Perfectibility and indefectible grace have been the overwhelming thoughts to some sets of Christians; the devotions of the Sacred Heart or of the Queen of Heaven to another. It is probable that every age has its own exaggerations and distortions, which it finds very difficult to recognise as such. It is not until the excitement has died away that the succeeding generation has perceived the true relation which has probably always been visible to those who have taken pains to remain calm, dispassionate, and independent. And thus, in times of scrutinising inquiry, we are not surprised to find that the duty of faith is commonly emphasized to the comparative neglect of the no less important virtue of hope.

My brothers, the difference between faith and hope is not difficult to realise when our minds are directed to the question. Faith is first the apprehension of truth; hope is the enjoyment of that apprehension. When the mind has grasped a thought in divine revelation, and it has appeared to be so probable that it would be unreasonable any longer to neglect it, and the heart has warmed towards the ideas which the thought

implies, then comes in the function of hope. Hope rejoices in the thought, investigates it, imagines its innumerable consequences in all their beauty and delight, and looks forward with pleasure to what is necessarily as yet not a matter of knowledge, but of belief, undefined, immeasurable, unexplored. There may be different degrees of apprehension. Such degrees probably, in different minds, may be almost innumerable. Some of them may be very slight. Your apprehension of truth if you are weak, wavering, and in unfavourable circumstances may be small indeed compared with the faith of the man of earnest prayer and ceaseless self-discipline. But the beauty of hope is that, however slender may be the thread of apprehension, there need be no limit to the enjoyment of the soaring thoughts which follow the clue that it has supplied. Thus hope is the partner and trusty sister of faith, and, when reasonable and well-grounded, leads on from one height of apprehension to another still more glorious and secure.

"All that happens through the whole world," said Martin Luther, "happens through hope. No husbandman would sow a grain of corn if he did not hope it would spring up and bring forth the ear. How much more are we helped on by hope in the way of eternal life!" "As an anchor thrown to the bottom of the sea holds the ship fast amid storms and tempests, so the Christian's hope penetrates the waves of this troublesome world and reaches the eternal shore, holding fast his soul amid the waves of sin." * "Hope is a marvellous inspiration, which every heart confesses in some season of extremest peril; it can put nerve into

* E. Foster.

the languid and fleetness into the feet of exhaustion. Let the feathery palm-grove be dimly descried, though ever so remotely, and the caravan will on, spite of the fatigue of the traveller and the simoom's blinding, to where, by the fringy rootlets, the desert waters flow. Let there glimmer one star through the murky waste of night, and though the spars be shattered, and the sails be riven, and the hurricane howls for its prey, the brave sailor will be lashed to the helm, and see already, through the tempest's breaking, calm waters and a spotless sky. Oh! who is there, however hapless his lot and forlorn his surroundings, who is beyond the influence of this choicest of earth's comforters; this faithful friend, which survives the flight of riches, and the wreck of reputation, and the break of health, and even the loss of dear and cherished friends?"* "Sweet memories and beautiful hopes are the angels in the heaven of the soul." † "Hope is the soul's oxygen." ‡ "We always hope," said Goethe; "and in all things it is better to hope than to despair."

"Hope, with uplifted foot, set free from earth,
Pants for the place of her ethereal birth,
On steady wings sails through the immense abyss,
Plucks amaranthine joys from bowers of bliss,
And crowns the soul, while yet a mourner here,
With wreaths like those triumphant spirits wear.
Hope as an anchor sure and firm, holds fast
The Christian vessel, and defies the blast.
Hope! nothing else can nourish and secure
His newborn virtue, and preserve him pure.
Hope! let the wretch, once conscious of the joy,
Whom now despairing agonies destroy,
Speak—for he can, and none so well as he—
What treasures centre, what delights, in thee.

* W. M. Punshon. † G. D. Prentice. ‡ R. Walsh.

Had he the gems, the spices, and the land
That boasts the treasure, all at his command;
The fragrant grove, the inestimable mine
Were light when viewed against one smile of thine." *

The difference between these two great Christian virtues and graces has been well marked by the shepherd poet of the North:—

"Some may allege I wander from the path
And give to hope the proper rights of faith;
Like love and friendship, these, a comely pair:
What's done by one the other has a share.
When heat is felt, we judge that fire is near;
Hope's twilight comes—faith's day will soon appear.
Thus when the Christian's contest doth begin,
Hope fights with doubt till faith's reserves come in;
Hope comes desiring and expects relief;
Faith follows, and peace springs from firm belief.
Hope balances occurrences of time;
Faith will not stop till she has reached the prime.
Just like co-partners in joint stock of trade
What one contracts is by the other paid.
Make use of hope thy labouring soul to cheer;
Faith shall be given if thou wilt persevere.
We see all things alike with either eye;
So faith and hope the self-same object spy.
But what is hope? or where or how begun?
It comes from God, as light comes from the sun." †

"Eternal hope! when yonder spheres sublime
Pealed their first notes to sound the march of time,
Thy joyous youth began—but not to fade.
When all the sister-planets have decayed;
When, wrapped in fire, the realms of ether glow
And heaven's last thunder shakes the world below;
Thou, undismayed, shalt o'er the ruins smile,
And light thy torch at Nature's funeral pile." ‡

My brothers, I would have you remember how large a part hope plays in the ordinary transactions of the

* Cowper. † Thomas Hogg. ‡ Campbell.

world; and then consider whether we should not expect it to have a corresponding sphere in things spiritual. "Hope is the mainspring of life," is a reported saying of Socrates. "A propensity to hope and joy is real riches," wrote Hume; "a propensity for fear and sorrow, real poverty." "Hope is the chief blessing of man," said Johnson; "and that hope only is rational of which we are sensible that it cannot deceive us." "Hope," wrote Addison, "quickens all the parts of life, and keeps the mind awake in her most remiss and indolent hours; it gives habitual serenity and good-humour; it is a kind of vital heat in the soul, that cheers and gladdens her when she does not attend to it; it makes pain easy, and labour pleasant. No kind of life is so happy as that which is full of hope, especially when the hope is well grounded, and when the object of it is of an exalted kind, to make the person happy who enjoys it." And a popular living writer has written of it with great acuteness as an ingredient in the affairs of every day: "We are not among those who are given to over-much complaining. We have an especial antipathy to the whole brood of grumblers and croakers and murmurers. We have nothing to do with despair. Hope is our watchword and our rallying cry. We love to fix our attention on the brightest, sunniest spots of every picture. If, as we look around us, we see many things which offend our eyes; if, as we listen to the onward rush of passing events, we hear much which jars harshly on our ears; if, as we compare things as they are with things as we would rather have them be, we find on every side ample room for improvement, we are bound to confess that we also see much that is encour-

aging, hear much which gladdens our hearts, and daily meet with fresh reasons for thankfulness and gratitude."* "In the treatment of nervous cases," we are reminded by Coleridge, "he is the best physician who is the most ingenious inspirer of hope."

So it is in the spiritual life. "Be of good courage and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord." It is the grand refrain of the Old Testament: "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God." "Let Israel hope in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption." "The hope of the righteous shall be gladness," says the thoughtful writer in the Book of Proverbs: "the righteous hath hope in his death." "Blessed is the man who trusteth in the Lord," said the troubled prophet Jeremiah, "and whose hope the Lord is." And in the midst of the extreme bitterness of his Lamentations he could write: "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." "The heavens and the earth shall shake," exclaimed Joel, the seer of terrible visions of judgment and woe, "but the Lord will be the hope of His people."

The writers of the New Testament are never tired of enforcing the lesson of hope as the handmaid of faith. "Now abideth faith, hope, and charity," wrote St. Paul in the most studied passage of any; and I have already tried to remind you how it was that hope could stand side by side with faith and yet be distinct. "For the hope of Israel am I bound with this chain," he exclaimed on one occasion. "Believing all things

* G. A. Sala.

which are written in the Law and the prophets," he said on another, "I have hope towards God, which the Jews also themselves allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead both of the just and of the unjust." That is the object, he says, of the ancient Word of God as it existed in his day: "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." He shows the Romans how the presence of the Holy Spirit, the spirit of love and purity in the heart, is the groundwork for a hope that is irrepressible and unperturbed: "Experience worketh hope, and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." And again he goes so far as to say to them: "We are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." And once more, though they must have been very elementary Christians, he appeals to that wonderful divine indwelling which comes to every man who opens his heart, however little, to God: "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost." To the Galatians, who had not yet achieved any great heights of goodness, he writes: "We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." The Colossians he exhorts by the same reference: "Be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel." For the Thessalonians his prayer is, in the most solemn and touching tones, that "our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath

loved us, and given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, may comfort their hearts." And on his beloved Titus, in much later years, he urges as the most important of all reflections, that we are "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ."

St. Peter speaks of hope in the same terms of importance as St. Paul. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again into a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." . . . "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." The writer to the Hebrews has identically the same value for this disposition of our minds: "Christ's house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of hope firm to the end." And lastly, St. John speaks of the most awful verities under the aspect of hope rather than of an exultant certainty: "We know that we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure."

"Hope humbly, then; with trembling pinions soar;
Wait the great teacher, Death; and God adore.
What's future bliss, He gives not thee to know,
But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.
Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
Man never *is*, but always to *be* blest:
The soul, uneasy and confined from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come." *

* Pope.

My brothers, we are not to-day speaking of faith, nor of its grounds, sanctions and evidences. Where you can rise to faith, that is always best; but we have seen from the accumulated testimony of the Word of God how much must always be left to hope, both as to the bearings of divine truth, and as to the relation of our life and conduct towards it. The proportion between faith and hope will vary amongst different minds and between different epochs. In times of great simplicity faith will universally be strong and pure, and less sphere of action will be left to hope. In days of intellectual unsettlement and perplexity, and keen and active investigation, to some, alas! the power of faith will seem smaller. It will not be smaller in reality, but smaller in regard to minds that are excessively sympathetic to the idiosyncrasies of the age.

Our own epoch is superabundantly interested in matters of fact. The spirit of the Positivist is about us, and, like the generation that sought after a sign, men eagerly desire demonstration. The very name and position of the Agnostic, him who will believe nothing about God because he can know nothing with mathematical precision, tends to obliterate in our minds the difference between faith and sight, between belief and knowledge. Specially, therefore, in such an era is there alike abundant scope and need for the beautiful handmaid of faith, of whom we have been speaking, in her robes of rainbow hues. Seeing what marvels the love of God and the faith of Christ have done in the past, even if you have but a thread of belief, it is your plain obvious duty to hope with all your heart and soul and mind and strength that He who so often in the days of old ruled the wayward

wills and affections of sinful men, will once more make His way plain before your face. And so, in the loving process of God's Spirit, your tribulation will work patience, and your patience will find in itself some golden ore of experience; and experience will strengthen hope; and your hope will never make you ashamed, because you will find the love of God shed abroad in your heart. Whatever you cannot understand, hope for with prayer and singleness of heart; and your hope will blossom at length into an unfeigned faith.

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." Though the mistakes and follies which you have committed seem to inclose you like a net from which you cannot extricate yourself, God can break even the strongest ties. Though your sins rise all up round you, and seem to be weighing you down to the ground when you would fain be soaring towards the blue sky, God can destroy their enchantment and their power. Though the doubts and uncertainties which have been breathed into your ear by the tempter and his agents seem to hang about you like a thick fog in which you know not which way to turn, God, like His servant the sun, can find a way of making their myriad atoms dissolve. "If God had commanded us to pray and hope only till a certain time mentioned, and His help had failed to come within that time, we might justly despair; but since He requires us to hope even to the end or last moment of life, this should keep us from impatience and despair." * A day will come,

* Bogatzsky.

be sure of it, when all divisions will be reconciled, all difficulties solved, all doubts scattered, all sins conquered, all inequalities redressed, all villainies avenged, all wounds healed, all sorrows consoled, when every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be laid low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. "O tarry thou the Lord's leisure; be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord!"

THE RESULT OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

"And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

St. John xvii. 3.

Preached at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, Sunday, May 19th, 1878.

THE RESULT OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.*

IF at first sight there appear anything absurd in the fact of a stranger standing up in this venerable building to address strangers, men probably older and wiser than himself, it is removed by the reflection that the most important of all ties is common between them. Preacher and audience alike, although compelled to spend their time in the busy life of human existence, have within the last half-hour again confessed, that to them by far the weightiest fact of all possible experience, is the nearness of the invisible God. They have agreed together to the amazing standpoint that, within a space of time to be measured by not much more than sixty generations, the living God appeared in human form, died for the sins of the world, and fulfilled the predictions of ancient seers and the hopes of mankind by showing that not even in His human nature could He be held by death. Of our own free will we have declared our certainty that there is a personal influence coming forth from the Almighty Father and from the Divine Son, which is no mere spontaneous outgrowth of circumstances, but such as can be prayed for, can be granted, can indwell, can be felt, can be obeyed. All this is more than a decorous fashion of speaking, a mould for habits, or a keynote for speculations. It is a series of realities, before which the most interesting

* Compare some of the chapters in Page Roberts' "Law and God."

of our occupations, the most engrossing of our earthly relationships and duties, must fade into utter insignificance. It is a solvent of the fashions of this world that makes all the children of God akin. As long as they are engaged in devoting their thoughts to the green pastures and still waters of God in Christ, however much or however little they may be to each other afterwards, when they pass out again into the external dominion of human society and custom, here they are nothing else than sons of the same Father, brothers of the same Christ, fellow-heirs of the same kingdom, animated by the same hope, rejoicing in the same forgiveness, striving for the same mastery, praying for the same blessings, united by the same Spirit.

And when we look round on these vast considerations for some special point on which we, met together thus once, might unite our minds not idly, what could be more in agreement with the usual tenor of what you hear in this place, or more refreshing in the din of human pride and folly in all the clamorous turmoil of their conflicts and controversies, than to turn from modern ways of looking at these things, or of putting questions connected with them, back once more to the simplicity of the written Word, and see how such matters were put by our Lord Himself, how He looked at them, in what form they impressed themselves on the minds of His Apostles, and what meaning the difference between this and our own speculations ought to have for ourselves.

There can hardly be a Christian creed shorter, and at the same time more comprehensive, than this passage in the prayer for His disciples which our Lord uttered aloud in the supper-room at Jerusalem. "And this is

life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." And there can hardly be one, when we come to examine its expressions, more opposed to the method and tendency of modern religious speculations. Where they are long, it is short. Where they are elaborate, it is simple. Where they ask how and why in a hundred details, it quietly puts the fact in all its broadness. Where they aim at exclusion, it insists on comprehension. Where they pile up definitions and descriptions, it points only to the Father and the Son. Where they combat errors, it states truths. I do not wish to persuade myself that the longer symbols of later times, Athanasian Creed, or Westminster Confession, or Thirty-nine Articles, may not be necessary, true, and useful. As errors cropped up it was right to expose them and define the contrary truths. But in these longer descriptions of faith, important as they are, we sometimes run the risk of fancying that it is an intellectual thing to be believed, rather than a life through them to be lived. And when our religious instincts are diffused over so many points of serious detail, the results of heresies and errors in the past, we incur the danger of investing them with the thought rather than with the affections; and mind without love does not greatly move us. And few will deny that the soul is warmed when it looks back to the simplicity of our Lord's words, and that in reminding it of these broad, grand fundamental verities, you may sometimes do more to kindle in it afresh the flame of divine love, than if you labour ever so hard at solely making the intellect understand ever so clearly the exact relations of all the august deductions of a philosophical system of Christianity.

Now, we are not concerned here to discuss whether the style of St. John influenced the manner of his rendering of our Lord's words, or his devout intimacy with his Master had such an effect upon his own thought that it ran in the same mould. Comparing the discourses in the fourth Gospel with those in the first three on the one hand, and with the Epistles of St. John on the other, we see that there is something in the first position; comparing the Epistles directly with the discourses and the narratives, we see that there is a great deal in the second. But it is enough for us to know that we have the thought of Christ, and to remember that the same Spirit which spoke in Him both called all things to the Apostles' remembrance, and also gave them of the things of God to speak and to write to the Churches. As each Epistle is coloured externally by the idiosyncrasies of each writer, although there is the same inspiration from the Almighty guiding each into all truth, so also it is the same Christ that speaks and acts in all four Gospels, yet each Evangelist has his own method of telling the tale, his own idea of proportion or comparative interest, his own expression and style. And thus, although in the fourth Gospel we may not unnaturally be reminded more of John than of Matthew, of Mark, or of Luke, still we know that we have the very meaning of our Lord Himself and none other. A contrast between this text and the parallel in the Epistle shows this with abundant clearness. When St. John wishes to express the thought in his own words, and not our Lord's, at the end of the first Epistle, although the style may be similar and the intention like, yet the directness, the authority, the simplicity, the depth, the unexpected-

ness, the originality, the divinity of Him who spake as never yet man spake is gone. When the thought had once been put, John could say, "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." But it was none but the Son of God Himself who could say, "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

Here, then, we have our Lord's own account of what it concerns us most to know. What would a modern have said in answer to the question, "What is eternal life?" His language would be mostly of the future. Living for ever, might have been the reply. Death will have no more dominion over us. We shall go on enjoying perpetual youth from century to century, from age to age, past all counting or imagination. It will be heaven, would answer another; the tree with the unfading fruit, the river with the crystal waters of health, the transparent sea of inexhaustible beauty, the jewelled palaces of pleasures that last for evermore. Or it will be everlasting joy, one delight transformed into another in endless succession without weariness or satiety till the brain reels at the very thought of it.

Or it will be rest for the weary, the troubled, the sin-laden, the certainty of victory after tedious struggles, the assurance of repose at last after a lifetime of dangers and falls and ill-success, peace after sorrows and disappointments, calm restored to the passionate and tumultuous soul that yet clung on to the buoyant hope. Or it will be a circle of activity and usefulness never ending, still beginning, ever enlarging with

wider aims, unexplored spheres, larger energies, untempered by failure or frailty. Or it will be the perpetual investigation of truth, the successful interrogation of the innermost secrets of nature, the fruitful reaping of the innumerable fields of knowledge and wisdom. Or it will be the blessedness of unimpeded love, when friendship will have no repulse, and virtue in countless varieties of grace and beauty will ever be present to be admired. Or it will be the unceasing worship of praise, thanksgiving, and humble adoration.

Such would be the drift of most of the answers that would be returned to the question, "What is eternal life?" There might be an element of truth in each of them; but they would all alike err in being speculations about the future, instead of facts of present experience. And they would all alike be deficient because not founded on an existing actual relation with Him who is the source and the end of all life whatever.

But there would be another set of answers as well. Not content with saying what eternal life will be, the controversies of modern times plainly show that they would consider it an integral part of the discussion to define how it must be won. Some would confine the conditions to the strictest orthodoxy only, saying that whatever the whole Church has believed all Christians must believe, or they can have no hope. Others would lay them in the acceptance of a creed. Many would assert that it can be gained only by belonging to a particular form of ecclesiastical organization, with special tests of validity. Others would have their own little shibboleths, such as faith without works, or infant baptism, or sudden conversion, or positive assurance, or

some other of the thousand minor controversies that have been the prominent causes of union and repulsion between different bodies of Christians, and which have, therefore, seemed to them all-important. But by none of these, nor by anything of the kind, does Christ confine the state of salvation. "This is eternal life," He says, "that they may know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

Our Lord, then, differs from the tendencies of modern times in other ways, and especially in two points: (1) by regarding eternal life as a thing emphatically of the present, and not inquiring into the future; lasting, indeed, into the future, but begun and known and partly explained in the present; (2) by founding it on the very simplest conceivable elements of religion.

Instead of seeking arguments about what will happen in the next world, we are to look within ourselves. The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart. In the workings of the conscience, in the sense of right and wrong, in the almost involuntary submission of the intellect before the words of Holy Scripture, in the impossibility of divesting ourselves of the idea of a creating God, in the equal impossibility of thinking of the world of nature or of spirits at however remote a period without ourselves as spectators, here, in the indisputable region of our own consciousness, in the secret tabernacle of our own hearts are we to look and to find the foundations, the workings, the evidences, the signs, the traces, the realities of spiritual life. So far even the modern Pantheist has a true conception of the sphere of religious thought.

But it is in the next step that the Pantheist is so

miserably deficient. It is because he finds a God in himself, and not himself in a God, that the outlook to him is dreary. Lost in a puzzle of words, he can conceive no higher intelligence than his own; but the more we look into ourselves, the more abundantly sure do we become that in the living God we ourselves live and move and have our being. (1) In everything that we see, be it art, or science, or history, we feel the everlasting arms. In His power and wisdom, in our insignificant littleness, we find all difficulties solved. We rejoice in Him as the Father of all things, and know that He who numbers the very hairs of our head has given us our little share of the divine nature. (2) And we cry out upon our base ingratitude, if in all the course of our lives, in the upshot or the possibilities of everything that has happened to us, we do not see how His love has been guiding and moulding us, answering our prayers far otherwise than we deserved or even desired, spreading our paths with happiness of a kind which demonstrates to us that not in the satisfaction of momentary enjoyment but in that which is solid and lasting and powerful and effectual over ourselves for good—in a word, that which belongs neither to fleeting time nor to limited space—lies the true aim of our destiny. (3) And in God as revealed to us by Scripture, by nature, and by our inner witness of right and wrong, we find a perfection of purity which is ever urging us on more thoroughly to cleanse our ways and purify our hearts; so that in that ideal which is forced upon us by our knowledge of Him before whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, we have a practical hold on something compared with which the

changeful sands of earthly events are but as a dream; the nearer we grow to that ideal, the surer we are of the eternal. (4) And if the knowledge of God which we thus have as the universal Father, as Love, and as Purity, gives us in this way some foretaste of that which passeth not away, bright shoots, as it has been well said, of everlastingness, so too is it when we see Him as Light or Truth. We see that the little systems of earth have their day, but we feel that there is something behind of which they are mere broken rays. There is something permanent, some lasting perennial well of light, truth, wisdom, knowledge, which shifts not, which is not one-sided, without which all human opinion would be incoherent, and in virtue of which alone it has any element that is stable and solid. And so again the more we learn, the wider our knowledge, the deeper our philosophy, so step by step it dawns upon us that we are mounting up something which cannot perish, and which, in so far as we are in any degree worthy of it, has lent us for the time its own undying vitality. The more, in short, that we know of God, the more experience we have already of eternal life.

But, alas! we are not in ourselves worthy of it. There is the difficulty. We may bask in our knowledge of the Fatherhood of God, and yet be self-indulgent. We may be conscious of His love, and yet love our own ways and caprices. We may be painfully aware of His ideal purity, and yet have made no conquest over the thoughts and desires of our lower nature. We may be convinced of His light and truth, and yet be careless of self-scrutiny. Here is the value of the second portion of our Lord's account

of eternal life. "And Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

It is when we know that we need a Saviour, both for past transgressions and stains, and to save us from the promptings of sin, that we feel that humility, self-distrust, and repentance, which let us into a new world of spiritual power. It is when we have not to look merely into our own conscience and reason which we know may be perverted, but into the mirrored glory as of the only-begotten Son of God, into the character and actions of Him who was full of love and grace and truth, that we feel, as it has been called, the expulsive force of a new affection. It is when we see the whole history of the world changed by the resurrection of the Son of God, yes, and our own souls strengthened by His risen life, that we feel in our self-conquest that our feet are upon the everlasting Rock. It is in realising in ourselves the life of Him who went about doing good, in the life of brotherly love and unselfish benevolence, that we find for ourselves, in the certainty of practical experience, that we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we know Him that is true; and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. We too, like John, have thus leant on Jesus' bosom. We too have given ourselves to the Word. We too, having plunged into its depths, are in the bosom of the eternal Word, as that Word Himself is in the bosom of the Father.

The fact so often insisted on in Scripture, that Christ died for the whole world if they would only avail themselves of His redemption, is of inestimable comfort to us, in regard to those who did not know

the incarnation of the Son in Jesus. We know that, although specially born into the world at Bethlehem, He was in the world from the time when He went forth from the Father to create it. We know that He was the Angel of the Covenant, the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, the Captain of the Lord's host, the glory of the Shekinah, the splendour of the Holy of Holies. We know that Abraham saw His day and was glad. We know that psalmist and prophet had glimpses of His coming. We know that everywhere and at all times He was the source of all truth. And thus, just as in the heathen or pagan world we rejoice to think that even in the worship of false gods, wherever there was a true reverence for the divine, heartfelt prayer and conscientious action, there the Almighty Himself deigned to accept the homage; so, also, wherever there was felt the need of a Saviour, of sacrifice for sin, an ideal life to be earnestly followed, a moral responsibility issuing in a life after death, a principle of friendly love and kindness and virtue to be the pivot of action and thought, there, too, He who was born in Bethlehem was in some degree manifesting His eternal life; there, too, He was taking away the sin of the world.

And to return, in conclusion, to ourselves. We know from this intimacy of communion with God our Father and His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, that He will not throw us away when our work in this life is over. We have seen the King, the Lord of hosts, face to face, and we know that if we have been found worthy for that sight, He will not forget us. And we have within ourselves the beginnings of this eternal life; faith, hope, charity, wisdom, calmness, humility,

self-control, gentleness, strength. We know that these are of God and can never die. We know that they are eternal, not merely as abstract virtues or qualities of God in which we have a share and pass away, but that just as they are all centred in the eternal personality of God, so also they will never die, even as developed in our own personalities who are created in His image. All else—all that is not of God—the wishes of our earthly nature, the deceptive appearances that dazzle our eyes for a time, the shows and mummeries of all that is temporal and external, and that belongs to this world and not to the inner eternal world of virtue, of morality, of faith, of God—this will perish from our character more and more, and in the end cease to trouble us. But all that is of God,—in the same proportions as we have it here, else we should lose our individuality, but, thank God, in a degree that can only be limited by His love and wisdom,—this is our insight already into eternal life, and it will be our undying personality hereafter. God is in the midst of us; therefore shall we not be removed for ever. We know that if our earthly tabernacle be dissolved, we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

THE LIVING CHRIST.

"What hath God wrought!"

Numbers xxiii. 23.

Preached at the Temple, Sunday after Christmas, 1889.

THE LIVING CHRIST.

IT is my desire this morning to consider how very wide is the application of that principle on which all religion rests, that we walk by faith and not by sight. It is not merely that we have not seen God with our outward eyes, or heard the voice of His Son speaking in our own language. Nor is it that no angel has sung to us the melodies of the heavenly city; nor is the principle limited even by the fact that the written message of God has been given to us through human instrumentality, and is, therefore, full of the signs and traces and difficulties which mark the human channels through which the divine and inspired Word has passed. The principle extends to every branch of Christian evidence. We walk by faith and not by sight. If even one branch of Christian evidence were so absolutely plain and convincing to our understanding that we could say that we no longer believe it but actually see it and know it, then the purpose of God would be frustrated. Our moral training would be over. The extinction of the activities of the brain would be the paralysis of the heart. The premature sight of God and of eternal truth would make our religious life still-born. As long as we are in the world, so long God is training us by hope, and faith, and love. The exercise of all these three forces is

necessary to the maturing of our character. The annihilation of any one of them by some overpowering divine manifestation of the truth would not be for our good, and is, therefore, directly contrary to the will of God. In the life of the soul, with all its restrictions, the idea of an absolute certainty of scientific demonstration is a contradiction. Even the Apostles themselves with their unrivalled privileges of observation, did not fully believe until they had seen the glorified form of our Saviour blotted out as He passed upwards by the splendour of the light to which no eye can approach. And immediately after the ascension that which was all but certainty became again the normal faith by the multitudinous sufferings to which they were at once and for long years exposed, and by the delay of that second coming which they so vividly and ardently expected. They were taught again to walk by faith and not by sight. The evidence which they had would, to us, have been far more startling and convincing, and even overpowering, than to them, because that was a simple age in which God was still dealing with the world by not unaccustomed flashes of the supernatural. But to every age our Father who is in heaven, and to whom all times are alike, proportions the evidence and the divine helps to the needs and circumstances of His children. The one thing perpetually to remember is this, that in all cases, and in all circumstances, and in all times, the walk must be by faith and not by sight.

The particular application of this principle which I ask you to consider this morning, is in looking round on the world in which we are moving to see the influence and the power of our spiritual and invisible

King. It is natural that while we are engaged in celebrating the commemoration of the birthday of Him in whom we have believed, we should be led to contrast the state of things as we find them with that kind of progress and extension of His kingdom which either our impatience or our ardour would have led us to expect. The actual effects of the faith of Christ about us is the evidence which is the most immediate support of our own belief. The historical evidence, the philosophical evidence, the moral evidence, the literary evidence, the evidence of prophecy, the evidence of miracles, all these have great and just weight with us. Still greater weight has the evidence of our own conscience. But I think that if we saw that Christianity was altogether a dead thing about us, and that the spiritual kingdom of Christ was a kingdom without any subjects worthy of the name, this would be a sorer trial to our allegiance than the cavils of Hume or the mockery of Voltaire.

Here, then, it is of supreme importance that we should make no mistake. And here it is that I wish particularly that we should remind ourselves of the rule that while we may justly expect a reasonable confirmation of our hopes from the signs of the hand of God about us, we have no right to look for demonstration. And it is because they look for demonstration that so many are disappointed. The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Many thoughtful men who have not grasped this principle weary and vex themselves if they find any movement or tendency or practice or fact amongst a people nominally Christian which is contrary to the teaching of our King. They are disturbed by the signs of frailty or imperfec-

tion or mistake in those who are most sincerely His subjects. They are bitterly disappointed if they find that laws and regulations, and policies and movements, which they have been promoting, and on which they counted for the regeneration of the people or for the removal of woes, and scandals, and evils, have absolutely fallen flat, dead and hopeless failures. And so, as they have been looking in the wrong direction, Christ has seemed to them very far off. Fallacies have been the food of their hopes. Far from any promise existing that the world as the world would love Christ and be obedient to Him, we are taught the very reverse. If we find the world at all bettered by the practice and example of true Christians, and by the presence in them of the Holy Spirit, it is matter for the deepest thankfulness for so unexpected a result of God's power. Far from looking for perfection in God's people, we are always taught that up to the very end they have need to watch and pray lest they enter into temptation. God has nowhere promised to annihilate the human will, or to take away all temptation before the joyful release into the future life, or to illuminate the mind of his people with special inspiration beyond the influence of their age and education and antecedents and circumstances. The best of men are liable to err and to fall, and sometimes even zealously to promote their own mistakes. And far from promising or predicting any special or exclusive blessing on public movements, or policies, or legislation, or on what is called social progress, our Lord has most distinctly warned us that His kingdom was in no sense of this world, but that the only revolution, or change, or dominion which He wished to create, and from which

He would expect any benefit, was in the secret heart of the individual.

From the fallacious hopes and expectations which delude and distress the votaries of social progress may God this day deliver us! Entanglement with the worldly estimate of things, and the worldly way of hoping for improvement, is one of the difficulties with which we have to contend. We have not the courage to come out and look at them from the outside, and say with the clear, unhesitating decision of the ancient Psalmist, "Why do the heathen so furiously rage together, and why do the people imagine a vain thing?" The men of the world have hoped that perpetual changes in the law and perpetual increase in the spread of information would soon bring back the golden age. They are perplexed to find all the old evils cropping up in other forms. They look round on the age in which they live, and see that change when indulged becomes a passion for revolution. They see that literature and art, when encouraged to develop themselves without restriction, become the nurses of every vice. They see that the determination to go forward in everything, whether the direction be good or bad, has very widely sapped the foundation of modesty and reverence and self-restraint. They see children reading the literature of the gutter, and know that there is not a household in the whole broad land where now the innermost secrets of vice are unknown. They are aware that every country maiden from her foreign library can obtain the foulest books which were ever printed. They see the pillars of social order shaking, and policies springing up which are founded on the abrogation of the Ten Command-

ments. They see assassination preached among us, and the slaughter and torture of dumb beasts insisted upon because they belong to an opponent. They see no diminution in the number of maidens who have devoted themselves to Ashtaroth in the public streets; no improvement in the wages of the sempstress since Hood wrote his "Song of the Shirt"; little, if any advance in the dwellings of the poorest, the living and the dead lying in one room, bad drainage, bad water, damp walls, pestilence, fever, filthy air, and habits more disastrous still. Still the cities are polluted by the selfishness of smoke, still the children are ill-fed and stunted, and see no blue sky or country flowers. These things either cast down the men of the world, and discourage and depress them, or else drive them more madly down the steep of revolution.

The Christian sorrows too, but he is neither startled nor dismayed. He knows that no legislation or social progress can lessen the tyranny of selfishness, or make its victims fewer. Selfishness cannot be attacked in the mass; it can only be overthrown by the regeneration of the individual. The more individuals there are among us dominated by the love of God, wholly devoted to the service of their human brothers and sisters, and going about from morning till night, day after day, as long as God grants them strength in the Christian ideal of doing good, so much the more will the kingdom of Christ spread, so many the more will be attracted to the study of the message of God, so many the more will become centres of light, and hope, and life, so many the more will there be to war against the cruelties of selfishness. It is here that the power of our Lord is to be found, not in mechanical social

changes. It is for this reason, for the deep truths which it contains, that we welcome the noble lyric which the greatest of living poets has lately given us.* After pouring scorn on that Progress, halting on her palsied feet, in which in youth he had placed so much of his hope, and which had so bitterly disappointed him; after pointing out in scathing sentences the evils of our day, which we have slightly touched this morning, he reminds us that the real lever for mankind is the Hope of Immortality and the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ; how

"That which made us meant us to be mightier by-and-by,
Set the sphere of all the boundless heavens within the human eye,
Sent the shadow of Himself, the boundless, thro' the human soul,
Boundless inward in the atom, boundless outward in the whole."

And, in words of touching humility, he teaches the new generation not to set their hopes on delusions, but to look for all progress through individual following of the revelation of God to man: to

. . . . . "Use and not abuse your day,
Move among your people, know them, follow him who led the way,
Strove for sixty widowed years to help his homelier brother-men,
Served the poor and built the cottage, raised the schools and drained the fen."

It has been well said by the greatest of writers on Christian evidence, that the influence of religion is not to be sought for in the councils of princes, in the debates or resolutions of popular assemblies, in the conduct of governments towards their subjects, or of States and sovereigns towards one another; of conquerors at the head of their armies, or of parties intriguing at home for power. Yet these are the

* 1889.

topics which alone almost occupy the attention and fill the pages of history. That influence must be perceived, if perceived outwardly at all, in the silent courses of domestic and private life. Nay, more; even there its influence may not be very obvious to observation. If it check in some degree personal dissoluteness, if it beget a general probity in the transaction of business, if it produce gentle and humane manners in the mass of the community, and occasional exertions of laborious or expensive benevolence in a few individuals, it is all the effect which can offer itself to external notice. The kingdom of heaven is within us. That which is the substance of religion, its hopes and consolations, its intermixture with the thoughts by day and by night, the devotion of the heart, the control of appetite, the steady direction of the will to the commands of God, is necessarily invisible. Yet upon these depend the virtue and the happiness of millions. This cause renders the representations of history with respect to religion defective and fallacious in a greater degree than they are upon any other subject. Religion operates most upon those of whom history knows least; upon fathers and mothers in their families, the quiet villager, the manufacturer at his loom, the husbandman in his fields. Amongst such its influence collectively may be of inestimable value, yet its effects in the meantime little upon those who figure upon the stage of the world. They may know nothing of it; they may believe nothing of it; they may be actuated by motives more impetuous than those which religion is able to excite. It is in going from village to village and from parish to parish, from church to church, from chapel to chapel, from conventicle to conventicle, from

mission-room to mission-room, and by inquiring who are the most useful, and the most loving, and the most beloved, and the most respected, and the most esteemed amongst each little community, in the purity of cottage homes, in the unchronicled heroism of the poor, in the humble beauty of unemblazoned benevolence, that you will be convinced each Christmas-tide of the miracles and wonders which God has wrought in Christ.

But there is this further. The Christian religion does also act on public wages and institutions, even though it is by an operation which is only secondary and indirect. Christianity is not a code of civil law. It can only reach public institutions through private character. Its influence upon private character may be considerable, yet many public usages and institutions may remain which are repugnant to its principles. To get rid of these the remaining part of the community must act, and act together. And it may be long before the persons who compose this reigning body are sufficiently touched with the Christian character to join in putting an end to practices to which they and the public have been reconciled by habit and by interest, causes which will reconcile the human mind to anything.

What additional comfort is it then for us to recognise how vast, even from this point of view, have been the victories of our Lord!* He it is who has mitigated the conduct of war, and the treatment of captives. He it is who has softened the administration of despotic or arbitrary governments. He it is who by the incalculable multiplication of his written word has raised a public opinion which is stronger than the sword of the tyrant. Little as

* Cf. Brace's "Gesta Christi."

legislation can do, still it is of immeasurable consequence that for the most part our laws have had a Christian and not an unchristian spirit and moulding. Christ it is who has abolished polygamy. He it is who has restrained the licentiousness of divorces. He alone has put an end to the exposure of children who were considered superfluous or inconvenient; He who has stopped the sacrifice of slaves. It is Christ who has suppressed the combats of gladiators and the impurities of ancient religious rites. It is Christ who has banished the open toleration of that which was against nature. It is Christ who has so wonderfully bettered the condition of the labouring mass of every community, by procuring for them the blessed day of weekly rest.

In all countries where Christ is worshipped, in every age since His visible presence left the earth, innumerable have been the houses of God which He has opened for the relief of sickness and distress in every shape and form. It was Christ who triumphed over the slavery of the Roman empire. It was Christ who freed the West Indians. It is Christ who all round the coast of Africa is waging war against the cruel tyrants of the negroes. It was not the mischievous and passionate boy at Woolwich grown up, it was Christ who through the exceeding and excelling faith of His servant wrought miracles in sweeping slavery from the equatorial provinces all those years of appalling loneliness and discomfort.*

It is Christ who has freed woman from her position of serfdom and imbecility. It is Christ who has given us the passion of chastity. Wherever Christ is forgotten, there chastity is eagerly and

* General Gordon.

zealously attacked. It is Christ who has vindicated the purity of marriage, and given us the inestimable blessing of the ideal home. It is Christ who has put an end to licentious shows, who has taught the ransom of captives, who has by His own example made labour for ever noble. It is our Master, and none else, who has taught the true freedom, the freedom of the soul, the true equality, the equality which is spontaneous, the true brotherhood, the universal love to men as the children of God. It is our Master who has taught us the true remedy for the necessary inequalities of the distribution of wealth, by doing good with all that we possess. It is our Master who has put an end to the unjust absurdities of wager of battle and ordeal, to examination by torture, to the dark horrors of witchcraft and superstition, to the old tribal hostility to strangers, to the inhospitable rights of the wrecker and to piracy, to feud and blood revenge. It is our Master who has taught us that all alike have a right to the key of knowledge. It is He who has put an end to the duel; it is He who has cleansed our prisons and reformed our workhouses and asylums. He it is who has been checking intemperance, and teaching humanity, and protecting the dumb servants of man. He it is who has shown us the folly of persecution, and taught us the rights of conscience.

Well has it been said by a Socialistic writer, Cabet: If Christianity had been interpreted and applied in the spirit of Jesus Christ, if it had been well known and faithfully practised by the numerous portions of Christians who are animated by a sincere piety, and who have only need to know truth well to follow it, then this Christianity, its

morals, its philosophy, its precepts, would have sufficed, and would still suffice, to establish a perfect society and political organization, to deliver humanity from the evil which weighs it down, and to assure the happiness of the human race on the earth.

My brothers, it was said by the Ephesian editor of St. John's Gospel, in the epilogue in the last verse, that "there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books which should be written." If that was true of His short earthly life, how much more it would be true of the eighteen hundred years which have followed, during which He has been living and reigning and working in His Kingdom! Even in this brief and hasty sketch we have seen something of the evidences of the vitality and power of the influence of Him who liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore. How infinitely they might be multiplied we shall remember when we reflect that wherever in all those ages there has been a pure and Christian home, wherever a happy deathbed, wherever an act of unselfishness, there has been another sign of the presence of Him who was born at Bethlehem. We shall not sorrow as those who are without hope, over the manifold evils of our times, or the signs that the powers of evil are not less active than of old. But while for these things we adore Him with all our hearts, and rejoice in Him with a joy which is unspeakable and full of glory, we shall remember that what they depend upon for their origin, their growth, their stability, and their increase is the regeneration of the individual. Of that regeneration they are the spontaneous and necessary outcome.

If, therefore, we desire this day by promoting such evidences of the presence and power of Christ to strengthen our own hold and the hold of our brethren on the realities of the unseen world, let us not begin at the wrong end. It is only when we are converted that we can strengthen either ourselves or our brethren. God grant that for us this Christmas-tide may be marked by a new and more thorough dedication of ourselves to Him, to be made through the Son in the Holy Ghost; and let our prayer be the prayer of the Apostles in the early days of their persecutions, when they lifted up their voice with one accord to God and said: "Lord, Thou art God, which hast made heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; who by the mouth of Thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto Thy servants that with all boldness they may speak Thy word, by stretching forth Thine hand to heal the woes and sores of this our day; and that through us, even us, signs and wonders may be done by the name of Thy holy child JESUS!"

CHRIST AND THE ATONEMENT.

"God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

Romans v. 12.

Preached at St. Paul's Cathedral, Sunday, 21st February, 1892.

CHRIST AND THE ATONEMENT.

THE doctrine of the Cross of Christ is the great central fact of religion. Other doctrines are significant each in their own degree. Some of them lead up to the supreme verity of redemption, some of them are a consequence of the vast importance of that truth. But round the leading idea of the Divine Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world all the other truths of our faith are grouped. To a candid observer of the facts of the New Testament, the one thought which runs through the whole from beginning to end is the Lord Jesus Christ as a sacrifice for the sin of mankind.

It is necessary to remember this again and again, because in consequence of the accidents of popular discussion, and the various waves of thought, compounded as they are of many different currents, which from time to time pass over the mind of an intelligent and alert people, the true proportion of doctrine is not always maintained. Sometimes greater stress is laid on the Incarnation, sometimes on the Resurrection, sometimes on the life of our Lord in His Church. And it has always been true that the submission of the human intellect to the work of Christ in redemption has been difficult to men who are proud of their mental power, and who have been accustomed to rely on their own reason. It has always been the same as it was in

the time of St. Paul: "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the Cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. . . . For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." Nothing is commoner in our own days, even in our own Church, than to find men who are willing to believe anything rather than the one simple glorious truth, that Christ Himself bare our sins in His own body on the tree.

Now when men object to the Atonement, and exercise great ingenuity in trying to explain away everything that is told us about it in the Bible, it is of the highest moment for us to see what our Lord actually said about it Himself. If there is a revelation at all, the plain original meaning of the words of Holy Scripture must be worth all the ingenuity of human speculation.

The most striking passage is perhaps that in which after His resurrection He explained to the two disciples as they walked to Emmaus, all the ancient types and prophecies of a suffering and atoning Messiah, and applied them to Himself. He summed up the whole meaning of His earthly career: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to have entered into His glory? And beginning at Moses and

all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

In the early interview with Nicodemus He had set forth the same fundamental doctrine of His mission on earth. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

In the deep theological discourse after the feeding of the five thousand, He spoke of His flesh which He gave for the life of the world. And again, in the profoundly spiritual address on the sheepfold the same was His doctrine: "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

In the touching and beautiful conversations which He held with His disciples in the upper chamber during the last evening of His life, He told them, in words which would come back to them with intense meaning in after days: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

And, lastly, could anything have been plainer than the expressions which He used in instituting the Last Supper? "Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to His disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is My body. And He took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Just as He had said once before, in teaching His disciples about pre-eminence: "The Son of Man came not to be ministered

unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

These are just a few of His sayings at different times, and from different gospels, a small portion of all that He taught His disciples on the subject, but all illustrating and supporting that keynote of interpretation to His life and office, which John the Baptist had given when He came to submit to His rite of repentance: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Can you wonder, then, my brothers, at the language which His apostles used about the Atonement after He was gone? No theological web of their own was it, borrowed from narrow Jewish superstitions for the purpose of making a more complete doctrinal system out of the life and teaching of their Master. It was the foundation of all His teaching, the greatest of all divine truths, the one supreme office which He claimed to fulfil: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?"

Nothing in fact can be more absolutely clear than the teaching on this subject of the founders of the Christian Church, or more completely harmonious with all that our Lord Himself had said.

What was the outcome of Peter's memorable sermon on the Day of Pentecost? "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."

What did he say to the Council when he and the rest were brought before them the very year of the Crucifixion? "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a

Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins."

What was the passage on which we are told that Philip the Deacon preached Jesus to the Ethiopian? The sacrificial prophecy of Isaiah: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and, as a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened He not His mouth."

What was the conclusion of the message of Peter to Cornelius? "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins."

What was the burden of St. Paul's sermon at Antioch? "Be it known unto you that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

We are therefore fully prepared to find St. Paul writing in his Epistle to the Romans: "We are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past." And here (in our lesson for this afternoon) he says: "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. . . . God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. . . . Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." I say, there is nothing new in that from what Christ had Himself laid down; it would have been a perplexity and a surprise to us if St. Paul had taught any other view of the death of the Redeemer.

Just the same is his voice to the Corinthians: "God hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

To the Galatians he teaches exactly the same view: "Our Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself for our sins that He might deliver us from the present evil world according to the will of God and our Father." And again: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."

And to Titus he writes: "Our Saviour Jesus Christ gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity."

Is not the whole Epistle to the Hebrews, that most doctrinal of all the New Testament writings, founded throughout on this mediatorial view of the sacrifice of Christ? From it one expression only need be quoted: "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many."

Listen how strong St. Peter is on this indisputable, fundamental point: "Ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." Listen again: "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." Listen again: "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."

Lastly, St. John is full of the same awful and impressive view of the relation between man and God: "Jesus Christ is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation."

What is it, my brothers, that you cannot help seeing about all these passages? Is it not this, that the doctrine which Christ and His Apostles teach is exactly the same? The doctrine of the Apostles, is it any other than the doctrine of Christ? The doctrine of Christ, is it any other than the doctrine of the Apostles? Can anything be plainer than the fact that it is no mere metaphorical idea of which we speak, such as that Christ's example of self-sacrifice would have a moving effect on mankind; but most certainly an eternal and stupendous doctrinal truth, the very mainspring and backbone of all their teaching? You have different words used: redemption, propitiation, reconciliation, sacrifice. The language varies. But let no desire to fit your religion in with any supposed general tenor of current ideas prevent you from seeing that all these words are but different aspects of that same immortal truth on which our very salvation depends; that our heavenly Father did of

His tender mercy give His only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by His one oblation of Himself, once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Take this doctrine away from the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles, and the whole must crumble into mere disjointed exhortations to a motiveless morality.

My brothers, the principle of substitution is no new element either in morals or in nature. It enters into every relation of life, and has been the stimulus to the most glorious deeds of the sublimest heroes of the human race. Did the Greeks see anything shocking in that noblest of all their religious dramas, in which Alcestis gave up her life to prolong that of her husband, the Thessalian king Admetus? Was not one of their favourite examples of exalted virtue the beautiful story of Damon pledging his life to the Syracusan prince Dionysius for the return to justice of his friend Pythias, and the complete forgiveness of Pythias on his re-appearance, which the prince had so little expected that he asked to be made a third in so noble a brotherhood? Were not the Romans the justest people who ever lived? Has not their system of law remained one of the monuments of the world? Is it not on it that our own law is founded? And did they not hand down the legend of Curtius, who leapt into the abyss to save his fellow-citizens from the plague, to the admiration of every generation? Was not one of their most glorious objects of reverence the tradition of Regulus, who came back on parole to Rome to implore his countrymen never to make peace with Carthage, and then returned on their behalf to the

Carthaginians, to be rolled down a hill in a barrel filled with spikes?

To the same purpose Xenophon tells a story of an Armenian prince who was taken captive, together with his queen, by the great Cyrus. Cyrus asked him if he wished for the restoration of his liberty, his kingdom, and his queen. "As for my liberty and my kingdom," he answered, "I value them not; but if my blood would redeem my wife, I would cheerfully give it." So delighted was Cyrus with this noble spirit of voluntary death on behalf of another, that he generously restored them both to the position which they had occupied before their defeat.

There are multitudes of other instances where the suffering of another has redeemed a man from death. One more let me cite. There were two brothers, one of whom was condemned to die for capital crimes. But on the appearance of the other, who had lost one whole arm in the successful defence of his country, and on his presenting the remaining half of the other, the judges were so touched by the remembrance of all that he had undergone in the public service, as fully, for his sake, to pardon the guilty brother. Here sufferings borne by one man redeemed another by popular consent from the consequence of his ill-doings.

There was, in the last century, one hundred and seventy-six years ago, a war in this country on behalf of the princes of the House of Stuart against the princes of the House of Hanover. The House of Hanover gained the victory, and the leaders on the defeated side were to be put to death. Amongst them was William, Earl of Nithsdale. He was imprisoned in the Tower of London, and the day of his execution

approached. But he had a devoted and incomparable wife, Lady Winifred Herbert, of the House of Powys. She was admitted to a farewell interview, and prevailed on her husband, by her heroic entreaties, to escape in her own dress. She remained behind in prison. Here was another voluntary substitution. Fortunately, in this case, it was not necessary to carry out the extreme sentence. The Hanoverian king said it was the best thing that the prisoner could have done, as he did not want to be obliged to put him to death; and nobody had anything but praise and admiration for the courage of his noble wife, who had certainly braved destruction in his place.

But, indeed, the principle enters very largely into our own law. One man is allowed to be surety for another, and promises to pay his debts if he fails to meet his engagements. The thing is done every day; and though we are all sorry for the sureties, nobody ever dreams of thinking that the law is unjust, or the principle of substitution is wrong. The only reason why we do not allow the principle of substitution to extend to cases of death, as is the rule in China, is this; not that it would be unjust, but that we should be too weak and sentimental to vindicate the law on the substitute, as the safety of society would require; and therefore the law itself would fall into contempt, and crime would flourish. If we could, like the Chinese, have the firmness to exact the penalty from the willing substitute, there would be no more reason for thinking the substitution unjust than there is when the surety pays the debt which he did not himself incur.

Do you not, further, see the truth of what I said awhile

ago, that this principle of one willingly suffering on behalf of another enters into absolutely every relation of life? How is it that you yourself are here at all? Is it not because your mother, with full choice and consent, agreed when she entered the holy estate of wedlock to run the risk of bringing forth children at the cost of that sorrow and anguish which are proverbial both in the Old and New Testament, and of which she was reminded from her infancy whenever, in the public worship of the Church, she heard a mother returning thanks to Almighty God for safe deliverance from the great pain and peril of childbirth? Whenever you light a fire of coal in your room does not its cheerful blaze mean that hundreds of thousands of strong, honest, Christian men have consented on your behalf to live the greater part of their lives in hideous darkness underground with all the dreadful risk of explosions and of floods? Whenever you drink a cup of tea, or taste the sweetness of sugar, does not its refreshing fragrance mean that hundreds of thousands of brave seamen encountered on your behalf all the terrific dangers of a storm at sea? Whenever you read of your fellow-countrymen, whom, perhaps, you yourselves had lately seen marching gaily through your streets, dying, in one of our little wars, of bullet, or spear, or fever in distant and perilous lands, is it for themselves that they are pouring out their blood? Is it not in order that you and your country at home may hold together the great empire which God has placed in your hands? When you read of our legislators sitting up through the long hours of the night in a heated atmosphere over protracted discussions and public business, is it for their own amusement that

they do this? Is it not that you and your country may be rightly governed? When your dividends come in at regular intervals on money which you have invested, seemingly with so little trouble that some persons even appear to believe that they grow of themselves, do you remember that, for every shilling that so comes, others have been labouring, and, perhaps, suffering on your behalf? When you think of these things, and such as these, can you help agreeing that the principle of one justly, rightly, naturally, and necessarily undergoing on behalf of another, and instead of another, much from which he would prefer to be exempt, is a primary and universal law of nature which goes through every circumstance and phase of our lives?

My brothers, it is by putting in motion this natural and beautiful law that our Almighty Father has provided for our salvation. "God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Have we not said enough to show that in the principle of substitution there is nothing unnatural, abhorrent, or unjust? Far from that, is it not rather the very reverse? It is alike a law of the whole creation, and when consciously and voluntarily put in force it has always won the highest admiration of mankind. I do not mean for a moment that any of the instances which I have mentioned could be compared to the illimitable anguish which was His who bore the punishment of the sins of the whole world. But I assert, with all the strength of conviction of which I am capable, the needlessness and superfluousness of the scruples of those who either slight, or explain away, or cavil at the divine employment. in the matter of their souls, of that very prin-

ciple on which every hour of their lives, and in every circumstance of their material existence, they so signally depend!

Then lift up your heads and take courage! Whatever may be the hesitations of those who are affected more by the ideas of the world than by the words of the Lord, we at any rate know what His teaching was, and we accept it in its fulness. Finding that each of the Apostles, severally and individually, brimmed over with the same glorious truth, and interwove it with all his preaching; finding that the idea of a Redeemer and of a vicarious sacrifice, far from being difficult or artificial, is a part of the very constitution of nature itself, and appears to have suggested itself, or to have been revealed, in a manner that was obscure indeed, but distinctly measurable, to some of the most important races of the world; to our great and endless comfort and refreshment, in all our worries and perplexities, we accept once for all, as so well we may, as so necessarily we must, in all its simplicity and truth, the work of "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." That is, in truth, what we are doing Sunday after Sunday in our Holy Communion. There we are humbly celebrating the most awful and momentous, and most real event in the whole history of our race. Useless, indeed, would it be to come there, unless, above all things, we should give most humble and hearty thanks to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man; who did humble Himself even to the death upon the cross for us, miserable sinners, who lay in darkness and the shadow of death; that He

might make us the children of God and exalt us to everlasting life. "And to the end that we should alway remember the exceeding great love of our Master, only Saviour, Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by His precious bloodshedding He hath obtained for us; He hath instituted and ordained holy mysteries as pledges of His love, and for a continual remembrance of His death." There are many priceless blessings and associations in Holy Communion. In it almost all our religious experiences and relations are summed up. But the greatest and chiefest, and in these days of subtle and various explanations the most invaluable of all, is contained in these precise, and distinctive, and most memorable words of St. Paul: "As often as ye eat that bread and drink that cup, ye do shew forth the Lord's death till He come!"

CHRIST THE WAY.

"I am the Way."
St. John xiv. 6.

Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral, Sunday afternoon,
12th March, 1893.

CHRIST THE WAY.

IN estimating the drift and bearing of the words of our Lord, we cannot be too careful to weigh them accurately. Here, for instance, Christ is the way, not merely because He pointed it out. If we took such an explanation we should depart both from the expression and the figure. We should not be paying attention to the facts of His life, and the position which they occupy with regard to the Word of God both in the Old and New Testament. He is the way because in His personal manifestation the true mediation for eternal salvation, the communication between the seen and the unseen, is actually given. It is just as we sing in the *Te Deum:* "When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers." By what Christ was and what Christ did, man was placed in a new position. Something that He did was absolutely the sole way of approach to God for all men. It would be for men to take advantage of that change in their condition which He wrought for them. They would take advantage of it by their personal attitude of trust towards Him, which we call faith. If a man is aiming at a goal, even if the road has been made for him, he must avail himself of it, pursue it, use it for himself; but the way has been prepared for him by another's

hand. For us the means of acceptance with the Almighty is the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ through the great act of redemption which He perfected. "Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried."

There is a great temptation to the human intellect to explain away the Atoning Sacrifice. It always has been so. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." There are two main lines of thought which try to represent the Apostles' view of the Atonement as only a temporary Hebrew phase of opinion, clothing a mere philosophical truth in an accidental dress. One attributes to the death of our Lord its chief value for us as the highest type of self-sacrifice; the other looks to the Incarnation itself as the chief end of our Lord's manifestation on earth, in which the Crucifixion was only an incident; and the Incarnation is represented as influencing man by a transfusion of the divine essence into human nature generally. The first is the rationalisation attempted by modern philosophy, the second that of the school-men of the Middle Ages. Both are plans to remove the stumbling-block of the cross, and to conciliate the self-sufficiency of human intelligence. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." There may be things in the Bible that are of local and temporary application; but if there is one idea that stands forth

from Old and New Testament alike as the central fact of all religion, it is the Propitiatory Sacrifice. Amongst the fundamental principles of revelation we cannot pick and choose. If, after the direct warnings of St. Paul, we try to explain away the Atonement, there is nothing left that will not admit of the same treatment; and the great simple divine teaching of the cross becomes nothing but a series of imaginative mistakes.

What was the new song sung by the four-and-twenty elders in the culminating vision of St. John, as they fell down before the Lamb that had been slain? "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood." What was the antiphon of the angels round about the throne, as they chanted in their ranks of ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands? "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, and wisdom and strength." What was the summary of the Lord's work and office given by John the Baptist, the last and greatest of the prophets, as the Saviour of the world came forth from private life and entered on His divine ministry? "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." How did our Lord Himself describe that mission? "The Son of Man came to give His life a ransom for many." It was the recognition of Himself as the true Paschal Lamb, for whom every figure and type in the impressive and significant religious system of the Old Testament had been a preparation, that made our Lord say, in His allegorical discourse on the Bread of Life, "The bread which I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." The same mastering thought was present in His mind in the corresponding discourse on

the Good Shepherd, which He twice repeated with emphasis: "The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." "I lay down My life for the sheep." In His farewell conversation in the upper chamber there was the same great teaching: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." This was the meaning of the Last Supper; as the faithful Hebrew partook of the Paschal Lamb to show his belief in that ordained sacrifice for sin, so the faithful Christian would partake of the one great final sacrifice of Christ by the emblems of bread and wine: "This is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." This was the meaning of the agony in the garden when He prayed three times, that if it were possible the cup might pass from Him. This was the significance of that most pathetic cry on the cross, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" This was the immortal lesson of that other cry of satisfaction, "It is finished." This was the wonderful and priceless account that, after His resurrection, He gave of his own human life: "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations."

His life was no mere fortunate and fortuitous concourse of circumstances by which through a series of necessary antagonisms between light and darkness, the Jews at length put Him to death. It was infinitely more than that. His death was an epoch in the history of the heavens and the earth. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon

Him, and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." The Atonement was foreseen in the eternal providence of God; He was "the Lamb slain," not merely because of the spite and hatred of the Jews, "but from the foundation of the world."

My brothers, it is important that we should remind ourselves how this was the burden of the teaching of the Apostles throughout the whole New Testament. Listen to St. Peter on the Day of Pentecost: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, have ye taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." It was by appeal to the power of the Atonement that the Apostles worked their deeds of wonder: "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand before you whole."

This was the doctrine which Philip explained to the eunuch out of the 53rd chapter of Isaiah: "Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." What was the main point of St. Paul's great typical sermon at Antioch? "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things." What was his solemn parting charge to the elders of Ephesus? "Take heed to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood." What was the upshot of his immortal Epistle to the Romans, the most characteristic, careful, and systematic of all his writings?

"The righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past." And again: "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. . . . God commended His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, then, being now justified by His blood, shall we be saved from wrath through Him." What was the first article of the creed which He gave to the Corinthians? "I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." That was his Gospel to the Galatians: "Grace to you from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father"; "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us"; "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." That was the message which converted the Ephesians: "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace"; "Now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off were made nigh by the blood of Christ, for He is our peace"; "Christ also hath loved us, and given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God

for a sweet-smelling savour." What was the characteristic fact of our Lord's life which he pressed with all his eloquence on the attention of the Philippians? "He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." It was the same glad tidings that he preached to the Colossians: "In Him we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of our sins." . . . "Having made peace through the blood of His cross, it pleased the Father by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven; and you that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death." Everywhere it is the same—to the Thessalonians: "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us"; to Timothy: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"; and to Titus: "He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity."

Possibly in the Epistle to the Hebrews we have the writing of the same St. Paul, possibly one that is independent; but the evidence is identical. The argument of the whole Epistle is founded on the fulfilment of the ancient sacrifices and types by the propitiation of Christ. Unless that argument represents a solid and permanent truth it is a mere rhetorical exercise. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." "He needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up

sacrifice first for his own sins and then for the people's; for this He did once, when He offered up Himself." "Christ being come as an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and of calves, but by His own blood, He entered at once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." . . . "Once, in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." . . . "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." . . . "We are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God."

St. Peter brims with the same supreme significance of all Christianity: the title of his hearers to be Christians is that they are sprinkled with the blood of Jesus; they were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world. "Who His own self," he exclaims, "bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." These views of our Lord, and the Evangelists, and St. Paul and St. Peter, were not merely accidental expressions of Jewish conservative fervour; years afterwards they were as clear, as strong, as definite, as predominant, in St. John: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." . . . "He is the propitiation for our sins." . . .

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us." . . . "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

My brothers, it is impossible that all these inspired writers should have been under an hallucination, and should have been intended to convey, under obsolete Jewish metaphors, some subtle philosophical doctrine which would be left for the schoolmen or for the nineteenth century to discover. And we must not forget the Old Testament. The New Testament is founded most largely, emphatically, and entirely on the Old. To our Lord Himself the Old Testament was definitely prophetic of the New. To us, if we wish to be of the same mind as our Lord, it cannot be otherwise. In the Old Testament His sacrifice for sin is foreshadowed in a degree, and with a preponderating definiteness, as to which no other aspect of His life, not even His incarnation, can be compared. Think of the whole ritual of the Levitical code; think of the Day of Atonement; think of the Paschal Lamb; think of the whole system as interpreted by the Epistle to the Hebrews; think of the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, nearly every verse of which is quoted in the New Testament; think of the Last Supper; think of the comment of the risen Lord Himself that the main burthen of prophecy was that the Messiah should suffer! Oh! choose any other religion you like, construct a new religion if you please out of Christianity; but if you accept Christianity itself, acknowledge it with humility and gratitude, simply and conscientiously as God Himself revealed His purpose to mankind.

It was in this sense that the doctrine of salvation

through Christ was understood by the greatest of the Fathers. Ask Clement of Rome, who is mentioned in St. Paul's Epistles. "Let us fix our eyes," he says, "on the blood of Christ, and see how precious it is to His God and Father, because being shed for our salvation, it was for the whole world the grace of repentance." And again: "Our Lord Jesus Christ gave His blood for us in the will of God, and His flesh for our flesh, and His life for our lives." Ask the author of the Epistle to Diognetus, which belongs to the early part of the second century: "When our unrighteousness had reached the full, God Himself gave His Son a ransom on our behalf . . . the just for the unjust. . . . . For what else was able to hide our sins, but His righteousness? Oh, blessed exchange! . . . that so the iniquity of many should be hidden by One Righteous, and the righteousness of One should justify many iniquitous." Ask Irenæus: "The Lord ransomed us by His own blood, and gave His life for our life, and His flesh for our flesh." In the immediate context Irenæus is dwelling on the fact that the Atonement had for a main end the satisfaction of the claims of justice. Ask Justin Martyr: "The Universal Father willed that His own Messiah, on behalf of men of every race, should receive on Him the curses of all, knowing that He would raise Him up after crucifixion and death." Ask the philosophic Origen: "God set Him forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood—that is, through the sacrifice of His body to make God propitious to men. . . . For God is just, and the just cannot justify the unjust; therefore He willed the intervention of the Propitiator, that through faith in Him they might be justified who could not be

through their own works." Ask Athanasius, the father of thoughtful Catholic belief: "The Son of God came into the world, not to judge the world, but that He might redeem all men, and that the world might be saved through Him. For of old the world as an accused person was judged under the law; but now the Word hath received on Himself the judgment, and suffering in His body on behalf of all men, hath granted salvation unto all." . . . "He offered His sacrifice for all, giving up to death the temple of His own body in the stead of all, that He might set all free from the guilt of the original transgression." Lastly, ask St. Augustine, the father of modern theology: "The transgressions belong to us; the suffering for us belongs to our Head. But because of His suffering for us, all that belongs to us of transgression is discharged." These are only specimens of a great treasure-house of teaching. All along there appears in the Fathers this supreme sense of the profound propitiatory value in the death of our Lord.

My brothers, that is emphatically the doctrine of our own branch of the Catholic Church. "Christ truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile His Father to us, and to be a sacrifice not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men." "We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings." That is the leading thought of our Communion Service: "The most comfortable Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, to be by us received in remembrance of His meritorious cross and passion, whereby alone we obtain remission of our sins." "As the Son of God did vouchsafe to yield up

His soul by death upon the cross for your salvation, so it is your duty to receive the Communion in remembrance of the sacrifice of His death, as He Himself hath commanded." "Above all things ye must give most humble and hearty thanks to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man; who did humble Himself, even to the death upon the cross, for us miserable sinners, who lay in darkness and in the shadow of death; that He might make us the children of God, and exalt us to everlasting life. And to the end that we should always remember the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which, by His precious blood-shedding, He hath obtained to us; He hath instituted and ordained holy mysteries as pledges of His love, and for a continual remembrance of His death, to our great and endless comfort." And in the central portion of that sublime service, the prayer of consecration, we call on "Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, who of His tender mercy did give His only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by His one oblation of Himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in His holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that His precious death, until His coming again."

O my brothers, the sacrificial sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ are the measure of the eternal difference between right and wrong. You would not be happy

even if your own mother could read every thought that had ever passed through your heart. You know that even her great love could not rise superior to all the record of guilt, of hatred, of ugliness, which you find in your conscience. How could you face Him who combines perfect knowledge with perfect holiness? It is impossible. You would be for ever covered with direst shame and confusion. But when the eternal justice of a broken law can be vindicated by the voluntary submission to universal punishment of the Son of God Himself, then we can feel the blessedness of him whose iniquity is pardoned, and whose sin is covered.

All that relates to God must be a mystery; but we can see the meaning of the warning given against moral disorder by so tremendous a propitiation. By humble faith we can accept the pardon of our Heavenly Father, who willeth not the death of a sinner. With our beloved teacher St. Paul we can cry out, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" And the pride of our intellect being abased, and the wisdom of the world being set aside, it is with the warmest and truest aspirations of our hearts that we respond, when our Lord in His infinite lovingkindness condescends to say to us, "I am the Way."

CHRIST THE TRUTH.

"I am the Truth."
St. John xiv. 6.

Preached at St. Paul's Cathedral, Sunday afternoon,
March 19th, 1893.

CHRIST THE TRUTH.

WE were lately considering, dear brothers, our Lord as the Light of the world generally, and we took notice of the enormous difference to the happiness and goodness of mankind which has indisputably been caused by the continuous and increasing shining of His glory from the days of His first appearing to the present. Last Sunday we had before us our Lord's declaration, "I am the Way," with reference to the doctrine of the whole Bible on Propitiation. To-day we will think, as far as we can, on the meaning of the accompanying statement, "I am the Truth." Of the three revelations of Himself which our Lord made in the upper chamber at Jerusalem in answer to Thomas, "I am the Way," "I am the Truth," "I am the Life," the first reminds us that He is our Priest, who took away the sin of the world, and opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers; the second shows Him as our Prophet, teaching us the will of God; the third as our King, the Head of the Body, supplying vitality and nourishment to all His innumerable members. Each is a most startling word; each is a word which no merely human mouth could utter without direct blasphemy, but each has been fulfilled in ways truly marvellous and overwhelming in the history of the souls of individual believers, in the

influence of His Kingdom on earth, in the frank and uncompulsory witness of the world.

Though the words "I am the Truth" are here put in their most concrete and pointed form, as from the lips of One about to close His earthly life, they stand by no means alone. The declaration in St. Matthew after the upbraiding of Chorazin and Bethsaida was no less clear and impressive: "All things are delivered to Me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, . . . and learn of Me." St. Mark describes with emphasis at the very beginning of his Gospel how "the people were astonished at His doctrine; for He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes." Who can forget the memorable opening of His ministry recorded by St. Luke? "Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee; and there went a fame of Him through all the region round about. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as His custom was, He went up into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto Him the book of the Prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book He found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year

of the Lord. And He closed the book, and gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. And He began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth." There was the full claim, as distinct as in St. John; and they understood it.

The supreme importance of His own words as revealing the meaning of His life, and death, and mission, and the destiny of man, is a thought constantly present with our Lord. "I have many things to say and to judge of you; but He that sent Me is true, and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him." "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things." And again later on: "If any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world but to save the world. He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken the same shall judge him in the last day, for I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting; whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak." And again, in the parting discourse from which the text is taken: "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself, but the Father that dwelleth in

Me, He doeth the works. Believe Me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me." "If a man love Me he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him. He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings; and the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me." And lastly, in that most solemn prayer to the Father before He went forth into the night of His agony, what was it that He said? "I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me." "I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

The paramount importance of the words of our Lord was from the first recognised by the Apostles. It is the climax of St. Peter's sermon in the Temple on the healing of the lame man: "Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." This was the dominant idea that animated St. Paul, the emptying of himself of all his own thoughts and prepossessions, that he might preach "Christ, the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God." "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom," he writes to the Colos-

sians. The thought of the Truth, as well as of the Way and the Life, is strong in his mind when he writes to the Corinthians that "of God, Christ Jesus is made unto us Wisdom," as well as "Righteousness and Sanctification and Redemption." "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," that is the constant theme of his instruction. And the whole of the deep theological Epistle to the Hebrews is based on the appeal to the words of Christ: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds." Next to the message "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," the whole New Testament is a commentary on the voice that came from the overshadowing glory on the Mountain of Transfiguration: "This is My beloved Son: hear Him!"

My brothers, it is because the New Testament contains the living words of the living Son of God and the explanation of them by His companions and Apostles that it is to us of such super-excellent importance and stands alone on a lofty eminence apart from all subsequent writings whatsoever. It is the Lord Himself who speaks in the New Testament; and the lesser voices are still the echoes of His own. But when St. John is dead the voice of inspiration is gone. It is just like the difference which Josephus makes between the useful and admirable writings of the Apocrypha after the time of Malachi and the writings of the Prophets of God before; these interesting treatises are on altogether a different plane, because the voice of prophecy had ceased. Never must we forget the

closing words of the New Testament itself: "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the Holy City, and from all things which are written in this book." The subsequent writers were holy and humble men of heart, faithful witnesses, laborious commentators, some with more wisdom, some with less, some with very little, but they had no longer the words of Christ to deliver. Directly you pass outside of the atmosphere of the circle of the inspired writings you are absolutely startled by the difference of that in which you are called upon to breathe.

Nothing is more remarkable than the consciousness which the subsequent writers themselves show of the immeasurably superior authority of the inspired writing. The earliest of any, Clement, who is mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans, apologises to the Corinthians for writing at all to them; he is unworthy even to address those who have been taught by St. Paul. "Look carefully into the Scriptures, which are the true utterances of the Holy Spirit." "Take up the Epistle of blessed Paul the Apostle; what did he write to you in the beginning of the Gospel? In truth, divinely inspired, he wrote to you Corinthians." We have a letter of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, a disciple of St. John, addressed to the Philippians; he declares that "neither I nor any like me is able to attain perfectly to the wisdom of the blessed and glorious Paul, who, when he was with you, before the men

who were then living, taught the word of truth perfectly and surely." Ignatius of Antioch, writing to the Romans in A.D. 107, assures them: "I do not command you like Peter or Paul; they were Apostles." The famous writer and bishop Irenæus, who in his early days was connected with Polycarp, the pupil of St. John, speaks thus of the inspired writers: "After that our Lord rose from the dead and the Apostles were clothed with the spirit of power from on high, they were filled with a perfect knowledge of all things." "The Apostles, being disciples of truth, are beyond all misstatement." Tertullian, the ablest and in some respects the greatest of the Latin fathers, put the distinction with great force: "The four Gospels are built on the certain basis of Apostolical authority, and so are inspired in a far different sense from the writings of the spiritual Christian. All the faithful, it is true, have the Spirit of God; but all are not Apostles." And the famous Alexandrian master, Origen, whose marvellous and brilliant teaching has always been a subject of the deepest study and attention in the Church, tells us that "the Holy Spirit inspired each of the saints, prophets, and Apostles. . . . The same Spirit was present in those of old times as in those who were inspired at the coming of Christ." "There is nothing," he says at the end of one of his homilies, "whether in the Law, or in the Prophets, or in the Evangelists, or in the Apostles, which does not descend from the fulness of the Divine Majesty."

It was this fundamental distinction between what is inspired and what is uninspired that made the members of the four great general Councils of the assembled Churches of Christendom appeal in every

case to the exact words of Holy Scripture. Strongly in contrast to this is the doctrine of the Roman Church, authoritatively set forth at the Council of Trent. In addition to the written books, it speaks of "unwritten tradition as containing the truth and discipline given by Christ and His Apostles." "With equal pious affection" that Council "receives and venerates the books both of the Old and New Testament, and the traditions themselves, whether pertaining to faith or manners, as having been orally dictated by Christ or by the Holy Ghost, and preserved by continuous succession in the Church Catholic." And as to the use of the Scriptures by private persons, that Council had the presumption to decree that "he who shall presume to read or to have a Bible without a licence may not receive absolution until he has surrendered it!" Much stronger expressions have been used by individual Popes or Canonists; but the words just quoted set forth the unquestionable law of the Roman Church. When once, my brothers, you have abandoned the example of Catholic antiquity and given up the appeal to the authority of the words of Christ, and have admitted the coequal authority of tradition, and of the free corporate and constructive development of doctrine, you have opened the gate to every conceivable mistake; there is nothing to hinder you from advancing step by step to the Inquisition, and Indulgences, and Transubstantiation, and Purgatory, and casuistry, and the worship of images and relics, and the purchase of masses for the dead, and the obligation of auricular confession, and the adoration of saints, and Mariolatry, and the infallibility of the Bishop of Rome.

"I am the Truth." How interesting is it in this light to remember the famous and pathetic declaration of the Princes of Germany to the imperial Diet of Spires in 1529: "Seeing that there is no sure doctrine but such as is conformable to the Word of God; that the Lord forbids the teaching of any other doctrine; that each text of the Holy Scripture ought to be explained by other and clearer texts, and that this holy Book is in all things necessary for the Christian, easy of understanding, and calculated to scatter the darkness; we are resolved, by the grace of God, to maintain the pure and exclusive teaching of His only Word, such as it is contained in the Biblical Books of the Old and New Testament, without adding anything thereto that may be contrary to it. This Word is the only truth; it is the sure rule of all doctrine and of all life, and can never fail or deceive us. He who builds on this foundation shall stand against all the powers of hell, whilst all human vanities that are set up against it shall fall before the face of God. For these reasons we earnestly entreat you to weigh fully our grievances and our motives. If you do not yield to our request, we protest by these presents before God, our only Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Saviour, and who will one day be our Judge, as well as before all men and all creatures, that we, for us and for our people, neither consent nor adhere in any manner to the proposed decree (of adherence to the errors of Rome) in anything that is contrary to God, to His holy Word, to our right conscience, and to the salvation of our souls."

"I am the Truth." It was a direct result from that noble and touching declaration, which, alas! pro-

duced consequences in Germany less fruitful than in our own country, that the branch of Christ's Holy Catholic Church which exists amongst ourselves went back to the simple loyalty of the ancient Fathers. "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

"I am the Truth." We need nothing but the words of the Lord Himself. If they are not true, Christianity is a myth and religion a delusion. If they are true—and who can imagine even for a moment that they were invented?—then we have, as John the Baptist said, the very mind of God. "He that cometh from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly and speaketh of the earth; He that cometh from Heaven is above all. And what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth; and no man receiveth His testimony. He that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him. The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hand."

All that we need to know about God and man we find in the words of our Lord. The first four great General Councils of the undivided Church are a help to us in estimating the drift of those words. The special documents of our own branch of the Catholic Church are an additional guide to us in throwing off the errors which, since the purity of primitive times, had grown round those declarations of divine authority. That guide it is which, when we are ordained, we of the ministry solemnly swear to follow. But it is

the words themselves that are essentially the most important element of our belief. If there is any reality in our faith, they are the actual words of Him who was the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person. In all things that affect our faith and conduct, there is our one and supreme rule.

We do not ask our Saviour for science or philosophy. We do not expect Him to instruct us in chemistry, astronomy, geology, physiology, mathematics, dynamics, biology, or any other branch of merely human knowledge. But about the nature of God, the destiny of man, the meaning of redemption, the scope of faith, the promise of the future, the reality of the unseen world; about our duty to the Almighty Being, and our right behaviour to our fellow-men; about faith, hope, charity, unworldliness, self-denial, and all the necessary Christian virtues; about the means of grace and the hope of glory; in all that concerns our souls and our characters; about sin and righteousness and redemption; there we have principles revealed to us by our Redeemer which are applicable to every conceivable phase of our lives. And as we think of the confused din of the Babel of voices outside the Christian revelation, and contrast the hopelessness and despair of the world with the calm and solid peace of genuine Christianity, however numerous may be its bewildering perversions and distortions, then when the Lord appeals to us, as He did to the first disciples, "Will ye also go away?" like the first disciples, we answer, with an overwhelming rush of enthusiastic conviction, and fervent loyalty, and deep, adoring devotion: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life!"

CHRIST THE LIFE.

"I am the Life."

St. John xiv. 6.

Preached at St. Paul's Cathedral the Sunday next before Easter, March 26th, 1893.

CHRIST THE LIFE.

WHEN our Lord, with His glorified and spiritualised body passed away behind the veil, and a cloud of light received Him from the gaze of the Apostles, He entered as the first-born of all creation on His work as Head of the Church; "His Father set Him," writes St. Paul to the Ephesians, "at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." To the Romans he describes Him as "Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." In the Epistle to the Hebrews we are told: "Who, being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." And in the eighth chapter: "We have such an High Priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." And in the tenth: "This man, after

He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool."

It is in regal and omnipotent majesty that our risen Lord is seated at the central throne of all things. We are obliged to use human language, but it can of course only speak in figure. We do not mean a visible throne, or an actual sitting. We are thinking of a glorified presence at the source of all being. Of the royal sway there can be no doubt: "All power is given Me in heaven and in earth," said our Lord before His ascension. "This royalty," says a theologian,* "is not for a moment a supersession of the Eternal Father's action. But in it the Incarnate Son, one with the Father, is the divine agent of the Father's will for the great special purpose of carrying into its eternal issues the plan of Redemption, to the glory of the Father in the Son. It has respect to God's final triumph over sin and death, and to the glorification in it of His Church. When sin and death shall be put under the feet of the Son, this royalty will have done its special work" as regards the present era, dispensation, and system of things. "In respect of it, 'the Son Himself shall be subject unto the Father that did put all things under Him.' Whatever that supreme crisis means, it will be no eclipse of the glory of the Son. The eternal Kingdom is 'the Kingdom of Christ and of God'; the throne is 'the throne of God and of the Lamb.'"

In harmony with the words of our Lord, and the teaching of St. Paul and of the Epistle to the Hebrews, are the glimpses that we get in the New Testament of the glorified Saviour. "Stephen looked up steadfastly

* Rev. H. G. Moule.

into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." "At mid-day," said St. Paul, "I saw in the way a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" St. John saw the same divine Majesty actively reigning in heaven, and he describes it in burning words: "In the midst of the seven golden candlesticks I saw One like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the breast with a golden girdle. His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; and His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters. And He had in His right hand seven stars; and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword; and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore."

At another time it is the same Divine King, but the appearance is different: "I looked, and behold! a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle." And again, there is a vision of the Lord as the Captain of our Salvation at the head of the glorious hosts of heaven: "I saw, and behold! a white horse, and He that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto Him, and He went

forth conquering and to conquer." At another time it is a scene of worship; the nearest appearance that can be given to the King of Heaven is a mystic figure as it had been a Lamb slain, "having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth; and He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne." At another time He who in the glorified form of His humanity is like unto a lamb makes war with the powers of the world: for He is "Lord of Lords and King of Kings."

These are spiritual glimpses of the varied and continual exercise of His power by Him who has "a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." These are indications, in emblematical language, of the divine power and wisdom with which in ways illimitable and omnipotent the destinies of the region of space and time are being shaped by Him "who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, by whom all things were created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist; and He is the Head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence; for it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." Words fail St. Paul to

describe the plenitude, activity, and universality of His power.

The operations of our Lord as King of heaven and head of His Church, it is impossible to delineate, because they are illimitable. We have seen Him standing before St. Stephen, appearing to Saul of Tarsus in a dazzling splendour and rebuking him for his headlong misunderstanding, shining in majesty before St. John, seated in serene splendour on a cloud of silver and reaping the harvest of the earth, riding on a white horse before the armies of the living God, or with the attributes of His finished work on earth resplendent about Him, and reminding the beholders, as John the Baptist was reminded when he saw Him by the Jordan, of a lamb that was slain, or again warring against the kings of the earth. Some things we know about Him. He is providing the future home, occupation and employment for His people: He Himself said, "In My Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you." Like Moses supplicating for his people in the bewildering profusion of their vices, wilfulness, and follies, His very presence in heaven is a perpetual intervention on our behalf when the unerring retribution of omnipotent and omnipresent justice would consume man in his waywardness as in a moment.

There is no need for Him to utter divine sentences on behalf of you and me and the human race as our advocate; His ever-blessed being and character and work of salvation are themselves our perpetual advocacy. His divine person as He moves about on this thought or on that is a reminder that can never be forgotten of His glorious act of redemption with which

we are this week about to occupy our thoughts in a special way as we are accustomed every year. "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come to God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

There is no separate heavenly act of intercession described in the New Testament; it is His loving presence wherever He is, with all the force of what He did on earth, that is the intervening power. There is no need for Him now to make a daily sacrifice, says the Epistle to the Hebrews; "Every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sin for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." "He needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the people's; for this He did once, when He offered up Himself." "He made there, by His one oblation of Himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."

It is here that our Roman friends have departed from the Epistle to the Hebrews: the English Church reminds us that "the offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifices of masses, in which it was commonly said that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits." The sacrifice was complete once for all; but the effect of it is eternal; and wherever our Lord is, there is the force

and meaning of the effect. "Our great High Priest, unlike Aaron, when He enters into the holiest of holies in the true sanctuary, mounts the throne. The true Aaron merges into the true Melchisedek. When the throne of grace is approached, upon it or beside it the royal priest is found seated, like the Shekinah above the ark, to dispense the blessings of His sacrifice once offered and for ever perfect. The great Epistle to the Hebrews insists on the fact that not only the sacrifice but the offering of it is over for ever; while the royal, high-priestly intercession and benediction, based upon it, are present and continuous. In His character as priest 'it is necessary that this Man should have somewhat to offer:' and what that is is explained to us in a later verse, 'He through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God.' The holiest of holies on earth had no altar; by passing into the holiest place in heaven our Lord shows that His sacrifice is without the camp. 'Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must He often have suffered, since the foundation of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.'" His presence, wherever He is, is a lasting appeal to that solitary act.

"I am the Life." It is salvation to see the Way, and necessary to know the Truth; but the power of the Resurrection is that our Lord is Himself the Life, present

by His divine being in the heart of every believer. He is the head of that body of which His people are the members. He is the vine of which His people are the branches. From Him flows the water of life. He is the bread of life. He is the chief corner stone, by which the other stones all over the building stand together in safety and solidity. "Abide in Me, and I in you," was His farewell expression of this truth. "That they all may be one; as Thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us." That was His farewell intercession. "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one." As St. Paul said, echoing the same vital principle: "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple unto the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit." And again, still more expressively: "In Him the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

My brothers, how can we, poor stumbling, foolish, erring sinners, have in us that divine life? Our Lord has told us: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life; I am that bread of life." It is faith, which, by the divine omnipotence of that which it touches, discovers within us the divine presence. St. Paul tells us: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." The one element that is necessary for the realisation of the indwelling of the Almighty is personal conviction of His existence, His goodness, His love, His revelation. When once we

believe, in however elementary a form, that the Lord Jesus Christ was not a mere man, but the Son of God, the expression of the divine will for His human brothers, then the rest follows. If we trust Him, and follow His guidance, it will be well with us. "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." God is all about us, and in us; it only needs our realisation of His being and of His message, and then we see Him, and know Him, and find Him. Then it is with us as it was with St. Paul: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." That was the one idea of St. Paul for those happy souls who had believed his message: "I travail of you till Christ be formed in you." He had his own irrefragable experience on which he grounded all his teaching: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." The Lord Jesus Christ stands forth from all history and says to us, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me though he were dead, yet shall he live;" and in proportion to our sincerity in accepting that divine challenge will be our share in the divine life.

My brothers, there are many means of grace. There is the rite of washing, which our Lord Himself ordained as the admission to His Church. There is our own conscious turning towards God, when we receive His sanction and seal to our profession of service. There is our own private intercourse with our Father in heaven and our compassionate Saviour. There is the common worship of Christian men and women in the sanctuary of God. There is listening to the preaching of His Word. There is the private study of His written revelation. There is quiet meditation on the

mysteries of existence. There is the attitude of patient expectant receptivity to His Divine Spirit. There is the contemplation of the encouragements to our faith given in the lives of His saints. There is the help which we get through the advice given us by experienced men of God. There is the spirit of reasonable enthusiasm which arises from united praise. There is the sympathy which all His servants feel for ideas and facts which are true and noble. But above all there is the special ordinance of the Son of God which He instituted at His own last farewell supper, in which we sum up everything else.

When our Lord had been speaking in His accustomed figurative manner of Himself as the Bread of Life, and had explained that this bread was His flesh which He would give for the life of the world, the Jews, who wished to understand Him, were perplexed. How can this Man give His flesh to eat? And He, determining that this deep truth should sink into their hearts, drove the seeming paradox further home. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me." It was a hard saying for the Jews; they murmured; from that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him.

But since the sacrifice of Calvary we have less

difficulty. Christ was the true Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world. Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us. As the Hebrews showed their faith in God's mercy by all partaking of the Paschal Lamb, so must we. And this the Jews could not do when He spoke to them, because there He was alive before them. This the Disciples could not do in the upper chamber, because He was not yet crucified. But in His pitiful love He gave us emblems of His body and His blood, by partaking of which we might concentrate our thoughts on His sacrifice, and become receptive for His special presence and grace. It was not actual flesh and blood that He meant; it is the Spirit that quickeneth, was His own comment on His words. "The flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." "To the end that we should always remember the exceeding great love of our Master, and only Saviour, Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by His precious blood-shedding He hath obtained for us, He hath instituted and ordained holy mysteries as pledges of His love, and for a continual remembrance of His death, to our great and endless comfort." Then is our faith strongest, then is our recollection sincerest, then are our thoughts most concentrated, then is our humility truest, then is our repentance deepest, then is our love warmest, then is our need clearest, then is our opportunity most available, then is grace most affluent, then is His person most felt within us, then is His promise most direct.

Oh, my brothers, we need not argue greatly about the mode of that presence, or the channel of that grace. All of us, whether we believe in the Transubstantiation

of the Church of Rome, or the Consubstantiation of the Lutherans, or the real corporal presence or the real spiritual presence, whether we confine the presence to an overshadowing of the holy table, or to the hallowed elements, or to the hearts of the believers; all of us Christians acknowledge the special nearness of our Divine Saviour. All of us admit that it is by faith that we receive the grace and the life; all of us profess our need, and our belief in the remedy; can we not all unite in beseeching Almighty God, who through His only-begotten Son Jesus Christ has overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life, that as by His special grace preventing us He puts into our minds good desires, so by His continual help we may bring the same to good effect?

THE SPIRIT FROM THE FATHER AND THE SON.

"Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?"
Acts xix. 2.

Preached at Durham Cathedral, Whit Sunday, 1892.

THE SPIRIT FROM THE FATHER AND THE SON.

THE Almighty Being, whose existence is so awful a mystery to the human mind, and at the same time so immense a consolation, and so absolute a necessity, has never done anything with regard to His family on earth which is not the best and most perfect, and most necessary for our good that could even be imagined. The amount of knowledge, for instance, which He has allowed us about Himself is probably exactly so much as it is wise for us to have and no more. It is even probable that, as He is perfectly and absolutely good and benevolent, and that the more we know about Him so much the better shall we ourselves be, therefore the most thoughtful and wisest of us do know about Him exactly as much as in our present condition it is possible for us to know. Science tells us daily more and more about His works; but when science approaches His being and nature, it has nothing to say. And yet on such a day as this at first sight we cannot help wishing for more light. We should like to be permitted to see in what way the operation of the Spirit differs from the operation of the Father or from the operation of the Son. We should like to know more about the relation between the three persons and the one God.

If it were for our advantage, if it were possible for us, we should have that light and that understand-

ing. But it is probable that our Lord has told us everything about the existence of God that we could by any chance grasp with our limited minds. We cannot grasp eternity, or omniscience, or omnipresence, or omnipotence. These ideas are like vast immeasurable circles, of which we can see one bit of curve or surface and nothing more. If the being of God were intelligible to our finite minds, limited as they are by time and space, that being would not be divine. It was chiefly by the Word being made flesh that the Divine Being passed within our ken; and even that revelation, which spoke by the taking of the manhood into God, could only speak in human terms as man to man. His message we can but accept; beyond that we cannot go.

We are told that it was through the Holy Ghost that Mary was His mother; that His forerunner declared how He would not merely baptize with water but with the Holy Ghost. We are told how solemnly He warned His hearers about the sin against the Holy Ghost. We know how He declared that David and the prophets spoke by the Holy Ghost; how He promised His disciples that when they taught it would not be themselves speaking, but the Holy Ghost. We are told how He spoke of a personal Strengthener or Comforter who would come from the Father and from Himself, in a way in which He had never come before, and whose coming would be of such inestimable value and importance that it even made the departure of our Lord Himself a boon. This is what our Lord Himself is reported to have revealed to us with His own lips; and because we believe Him to be the Son of God and the revealer of the divine will to man, that is enough for us.

We need not, therefore, go for analogies and argu-

ments to the Hindoo trinity, the creating, preserving, and destroying forces of nature; nor to the trinity of Pythagoras and Plato, the union of goodness, intelligence and will. However interesting, these analogies must be admitted to be far-fetched and uncertain. We shall not fall into the mistake of Paul of Samosata, or Sabellius, who, refining too much, held merely that the concealed unrevealed God discloses Himself by means of two powers which stream forth from Him, as rays of light are shot forth from the sun, one an illuminating power, the Divine Word, the other an enlivening power, the Divine Spirit. Nor shall we be inclined to venture into the regions where the mighty intellect of Origen soared, to declare that as the Son and the Spirit tower above all creation, so does the Father tower above Themselves; or that the Spirit is a creature in the literal sense of the term, the first creature made by the Father through the Son, receiving through the Son all that He has and is, as the Son receives all from the Father. These speculations do not interest us, because we know that about such deep mysteries all has been revealed to us that can be expressed in human words, and that it is possible for human thought to grasp. When we get beyond that we are sure to be framing statements some side of which is untrue. We are content to say with our own Church: "There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there be three persons of one substance, power, and eternity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And the Holy Ghost, proceeding from

the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God."

We are satisfied to sing, with Bishop Hilary of Arles, or some later writer who compiled ancient sentences, even if we do not accept his awful curses in their literal sense: We worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substantial essence. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost; but the deity of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one; the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. As the Father and the Son, so is the Holy Ghost uncreate, immeasurable, eternal, almighty, God and Lord. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. And in this Trinity none is afore or after; none is greater or less than another; but the whole three persons are co-eternal together and co-equal. Only we must be careful to remember that the theological word Person is not used in the ordinary sense of a separate human being. The Three Persons, says St. Augustine, if they are to be so called, for the unspeakable exaltedness of the object cannot be set forth by this term, are three distinct revelations of the same Divine Being, whose essence is thus shown to be threefold, just as every ray of light has a nature belonging to itself of being refracted in sevenfold colours; just as the human being consists of body, soul, and spirit.

As the Father is known to us by the wonders of the creation, as the Son is known to us through His

incarnation, so the Spirit makes Himself seen and felt by His gifts. It is He who conveys to the heart of man every impulse, motive, and inspiration which are in any sense good. The Old Testament is full of this thought. In very remarkable words we read how the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, "See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the spirit of God in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship. And in the hearts of all that are wise-hearted I have put wisdom that they may make all that I have commanded thee."

We are to think of the Spirit of God as the mighty energizing life everywhere present, in which each human intelligence is immersed, and which responds to every effort of the individual free-will to reach to higher and better things. We are permitted to recognise Him as operating silently and unseen even where the personal revelation of God has not been known. God is the Father of the whole human family, and where the Father is, there is the Son and there is the Holy Ghost. When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, it is by the Holy Spirit that these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearing by the omnipresent Spirit of God, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another. It is not merely gifts of a certain kind which are derived from God, but it is every good gift, it is every perfect gift which cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. God is the proper and native spiri-

tual atmosphere of the soul, of which the soul drinks or breathes whenever it has an impulse, even towards the most elementary forms of good. Even the simple natural affection of some poor, degraded, besotted mother for the child of sin and shame which she holds in her arms is a sacred and holy movement from the Holy Spirit of God.

So it was and is in the heathen world; so it was and is among God's ancient people, the Jews. They submitted themselves to the Holy Ghost more than other nations. Among no nation of the earth has the law of Christ received stronger illustration that "to him that hath shall be given." Because there was an Abraham, the father of all men of faith, it was possible that there should be a Joseph, the father of all men of virtue; because there was a Joseph, it was possible that there should be a Moses, the father of all men who have the knowledge of God; because there was a Moses it was possible that there should be a Samuel, the father of justice and moderation and temperance; because there was a Samuel it was possible that there should be a David, the type of patient, earnest, longing expectation for the realisation of God's presence; because there was a David it was possible that there should be an Elijah, an Isaiah, an Ezra, a John the Baptist, the heroes of the life which is inspired by God; because there were these it came about that the Son of God should be born in the city of Bethlehem, of the house and lineage of David. The forerunners all turned to the Spirit of God, and drank deep of the fountain of life which flowed from Him; and the more they drank the greater grew their capacity, the more life-giving the spring.

As it was in the heathen world, as it was with the ancient people of God, so it is with the virtuous men about us who, though living in a Christian country, do not seem to be distinctly and avowedly Christian. To say that, when they conscientiously try to act from the best motives, they are acting apart from the Spirit of God is surely the plainest blasphemy. These motives proceed from His ceaseless patience in always striving with man. It is in this sense that the article of our Church on works before justification is taken by one of the most scrupulous and careful of our bishops. All that it determines, he says, is that in order for works to be acceptable to God they must be done by the grace of God and must spring from a principle of faith. There is a light which lighteth every man who cometh into the world. "Good motives cannot but come from Him who worketh in us to will as well as to do of His good pleasure." There may be a dim faith in what Christ is and what Christ taught, even though, from inherent prejudice or from the warping bias of the intellectual atmosphere, or from the imperfection of the way in which the message is presented by human lips, the personal revelation of Christ is not understood. It is the same blessed Lord whom we know, who influences them though they know it not. They stretch out their hands in the darkness and touch the hem of His garment.

All these are the more ordinary operations of the Spirit of God. They only lead the way for us Christians to remember that we are called to share in that special and larger and freer and more visible outpouring which was granted to the kingdom of God after the incarnation of the Son, and which our

Saviour said the world could not receive because it seeth Him not, neither heareth Him. Shrink as you may from the tremendous responsibility, you, as citizens of that kingdom, are the light of the world, the salt of the earth, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people. You are called upon to open your heart to the divine Spirit in a way of which those who are not Christians know nothing. As the organic kingdom is a development of the inorganic, as the vegetable kingdom is a development of the mineral, as the animal is a development of the vegetable, as the intellectual kingdom is a development of the animal, so is the spiritual kingdom a development of the intellectual. It is no disparagement to the others of whom we have been speaking, the heathen, the Jew, the modern man of moral life, to believe in all humility and awe the divine intimation that you, living in the light of God himself, conscious of it, and communing with it, are called to a higher nature and to larger privileges. Apart from the relation of your own souls to God and to the future life, you are a benefit society for the rest of the world, whose highest delight it is to receive ever more and more of the divine gifts, and to dispense them by your influence and example, by precept and by practice, to all and each whom you meet, high and low, rich and poor, one with another.

The question, then, of this holy season is a practical question. The question which St. Paul asked at Ephesus of the twelve disciples of John the Baptist is the question which this day puts to you: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" You may have received Him in the ordinary sense, to the

extent to which the men of moral life but of slight religious experience have received Him, and, borrowing without reflection from their example, you may have rested in a fatal lethargy of contentment. Or He may have been granted to you in due portion at your baptism, proportionally to the earnestness and sincerity and the intercessory prayers of those who brought you to the arms of the Saviour. And then you may have driven Him out by wilfulness and indifference. Again He may have come to you more largely at such a season as your confirmation, when you dedicated yourselves of your own free-will to the Invisible before the face of the people of God; and again you may have grown cold, careless, worldly. From time to time you may have been "stirred by the breath of the heavenly gales," but you may not perhaps have been constant and earnest in entreating God to renew daily His Spirit within you. Would not many of our own day,* whose Christian knowledge and Christian walk must to a certain extent be admitted, be compelled, if they honestly replied to the question, to confess, "We know little or nothing as yet concerning the Holy Spirit, the spirit of true repentance, the spirit of the thorough new birth, the spirit of having God Himself for our Father, and none but Him, the spirit of intellectual and moral freedom from temptation and wilful transgression and the bondage of sin, the spirit of healthy, glowing, affectionate, unselfish sympathy for all the joys and all the sorrows of God's human family"?

It is a misfortune that the poetry which is generally the highest, most popular, and the most intelligible expression of religious thought has, for the occasion of

* Compare a sermon by J. H. Newman.

Whit Sunday, been composed chiefly by tender and devout minds of the less masculine type. They have thought that St. Paul's list of the fruits of the Spirit was exhaustive, whereas it only included such gifts as those of which the Galatians happened to stand most in need. When they have dwelt on love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance, they have forgotten that it is the same St. Paul whose description of the sword of the Spirit has been considered by the kingdom of God to be so characteristic that it has become his badge and symbol in the imagery of the Church. They have forgotten the terrible spirit of truth. They have forgotten that Isaiah has spoken of the more masculine virtues of the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. They have forgotten that though when He appeared hovering above the head of the incarnate Son of God, whose voice is the crashing music of the spheres, who called the worlds of the universe into existence, and who went forth conquering and to conquer, He descended upon Him in wavering rays of light like the flight of a dove, that men should understand the humiliation of the Divine Mediator and not be terrified at the visible presence of the Eternal among the hearths and homes of the humblest of the people—yet when the weak and timid Apostles were to be endowed with power from on high to make them fit pioneers of the kingdom of the new birth, He came in the form of a rushing mighty wind, and in flakes of burning living fire.

That is the Spirit for which in our times we ought to ask, as well as for the gentler and more feminine

manifestations. We need the spirit of manly strength and wisdom and foresight and determination. We need the spirit of impartiality and justice. We need the spirit of high and lofty aims, which sees beyond the exigences of the hour and the petty sordid claims of vanity, self-conceit, and personal ambition and worldly interest. Above all, we need, on all sides, the spirit of downright honesty and truthfulness, which scorns all subtlety and chicanery and casuistry, all splitting of hairs in public as well as in private life, in literature as well as in society, all wilful concealment of meaning, all deliberate ambiguity. We need each of us the spirit of the Baptist to rebuke and repudiate, with plain grim directness, these violations of the simplicity which is in Christ Jesus, who told us that our yes should mean yes, and our no should have no other signification than no. These are the gifts of the Spirit which our generation sorely requires. And as Christians we know that if we ask we shall have, if we faint not. We know that from Him who giveth His Spirit abundantly to them that seek Him, once more He will come like a rushing mighty wind.

CHRIST'S LAW OF SUFFERING.

"I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Romans viii. 18.

Preached at Windsor Castle, 19th May, 1889.

CHRIST'S LAW OF SUFFERING.

IT is our privilege, as reasonable beings, to try to understand in some degree the causes and the meaning of the things which surround us, the events which happen to us, the manifold puzzles of existence. Of course, the greater part of the secrets of creation and of God must be a mystery to us till, in a brighter and better place, we are allowed a fuller knowledge. Into the nature of God, for instance, we have but the very beginnings of perfect insight; just so much as He has seen fit to reveal to us and no more. We cannot explain the origin of matter. We cannot analyze the mystery of life. But on all subjects of direct practical importance to our own souls we find enough light thrown to enable us to form satisfactory theories, and to obtain that amount of help which will lead us to lean more and more on God as the source of all knowledge and wisdom and goodness, whose ways are mysterious only because we see them refracted through our own imperfect sight, and who is in all things our tender and loving Father.

Amongst these subjects of mystery and suspense there is hardly any that gives us more food for thought and wonder that the great question of suffering. What is the meaning of it? It enters so largely into all our experience; it has been said by one that "Suffering comes to us through and from our whole nature; it

cannot be winked out of sight; it cannot be thrust into a subordinate place in the picture of human life; it is the chief burden of history." Why is this? What does it mean? Why is man born to sorrow as the sparks fly upward?

Well, it is perfectly true to say that suffering is the consequence of sin—in other words, of the imperfect condition in which we find ourselves placed; but, thank God, that does not give us the whole account of the matter. In a perfect state, in heaven, that is, hereafter, we can well believe that there will be no suffering at all. We can well understand that ages and ages ago sorrow and pain came into the young bright happy world, the far-off golden picture of simple blissfulness of which the Bible speaks, and on which poets have loved to dwell, as the result and retribution of wilfulness, disobedience, and rebellion. It seems, indeed, almost a necessity that this should be so; for as the will of God is perfectly wise, perfectly good, and for the true happiness of his creatures, even in the very smallest details, it is quite evident that every act of free will which is in opposition to that divine wisdom must produce consequences which cannot fail to fall short of happiness, and will end in pain, calamity, and disaster. When these acts of opposition to the will of God became general and frequent, then it is quite easy to see that the unhappy results would become general also. So there would follow gradually a state of suffering increasing in degree until it has become so common and usual as we have seen. Death itself, the Bible tells us, is the result of sin; but for sin, it seems to be hinted that the human race might either have continued wise and happy in their earthly Paradise, or

else have passed away into the immediate presence of God, like Enoch or Elisha, without any pain or sadness at all.

But this is only a very partial account of suffering. It is not the whole truth about it. It would be dreadful and terrible for us if we were called upon to believe that every unhappiness which comes to the aching heart is the direct consequence of our own wrong-doing; our Lord Himself has most mercifully taught us that the fact is very different. When the tower of Siloam fell and crushed a number of people it was not in the least to be inferred that they were sinners above others. When the Roman governor slew a crowd of Galileans in a riot in the Temple, it was not in the least to be thought that they were worse than those who escaped. When the man was born blind, it was not in the least because he had a very wicked nature, or for the fault of his parents. Such things, as our Lord shows, are the result of the general laws of God's providence. Good people as well as bad may be killed in a railway accident; useful people as well as the mischievous may be taken away in some general plague or sickness. The wisest and best of men may have disappointments and troubles in consequence of the misconduct of others for which they are not in the least themselves responsible.

And there is one more reason for suffering which to us is the most satisfactory of all. God, indeed, intends all pain to be for our good, whether it comes in consequence of our own imperfections, or of the working of His general laws, or direct from Him. But that which does come direct from Him bears with it the blessed assurance that it is a proof of His tender loving-kind-

ness for ourselves. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." There are times when our Heavenly Father does send distress upon us for our own direct discipline. We ourselves think very little of parents who do not correct their children, who do not make them obedient and teach them self-control. We see how much better their characters are for such wise and far-sighted treatment. Much of the looseness of manners which we regret to observe amongst us may be directly traced to the excessive indulgence which many parents show their children. So it is with our Heavenly Father's training of those who have opened their hearts to Him. We may not be able to trace all our troubles directly to His care, but we have the privilege of treating them as such. They are intended to purify and refine our characters, to wean us from the world, to link us more closely with the unseen spiritual life, to teach us to depend in all things on the all-wise God, to be considerate and thoughtful for others in all their difficulties.

Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, in His human nature, was made perfect through suffering. "Those who have suffered much are like those who know many languages; they have learned to understand and be understood by all." Even in ordinary life it seems to be a kind of rule that suffering produces noble and beautiful results. Gold has to go through the furnace. The diamond has to be chipped before it can show its lustre. The chill bracing of frost and snow, wind and storm, seem to be a necessary process for the glorious outburst of the spring. None can become a good scholar without painful and laborious self-denial. Those gymnasts who instruct

us in bodily exercises, and who delight us with their wonderful agility and strength, go through so severe a training that it is a fact that sometimes for a whole fortnight they could get no rest day or night for their aching muscles but by hanging by arms or feet from the bar. And it has been said that, "When the life of the mollusc suffers, it is turned to a precious pearl; so with the Christian: through much suffering and tribulation he enters the kingdom of heaven, to become a precious jewel in the crown of the Saviour."

About St. Paul's sufferings there could be no doubt. Few men have ever gone through such prolonged dangers and persecutions as that astonishing list which he gives us. But besides that, few men have ever had so affectionate a heart, or one that yearned so much for sympathy, and met with so much coldness and disappointment. And there is one of the things which are hardest for us to bear.

Suffering does not only mean the loss of our nearest and dearest, as one after another they have passed into the King's ante-chamber, and left us with a bitter sense of loneliness and bereavement. Suffering does not only mean illness, bodily pain, or weariness. Suffering is often most severe and most trying when it is from a sense of disappointment. We are all of us so much circumscribed by the limitations of human nature itself, by the action of other people, by things which we cannot help. In things for which we are responsible, be they small or great, we so often see how well they would go if others would only do what we think they ought to do. And they will not. Again and again it happens that we cannot get things done as we would; they go wrong; and we feel it all

the more keenly because we saw how they might have been different.

But patience is the means which God intends us to employ for the right use of our troubles. We have found it so again and again, as St. Paul found it. And it is the wonderful effect that patience and submission have upon us which makes us in some degree able to understand what is meant when St. Paul says that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed. In another place he says that we actually glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope can never deceive us or make us ashamed because that feeling of deep inward peace and security which we have is really the love and power and grace of the living God Himself which is poured into our hearts by His Holy Spirit in answer to the waiting, patient, and expectant attitude of our souls. We know that something grand and happy and blissful will come at the end of it all, because we are already in some degree partakers of the divine nature, and feel in us the beginning of everlasting life.

"There is as much difference between the sufferings of God's people and those of the ungodly, as between the cords with which an executioner pinions a condemned malefactor, and the bandages wherewith a tender surgeon binds his patients." The one is but the agony of punishment and despair, the seal of a guilty conscience; the other is full of healing and hope, of strength and security.

> "Oh, let me suffer till I know
> The good that cometh from the pain,

Like seeds beneath the wintry snow
That wake in flowers and golden grain!
Oh, let me suffer till I find
What plants of sorrow can impart,
Some gift, some triumph of the mind,
Some flower, some fruitage of the heart!
The hour of anguish passes by;
But in the spirit there remains
The outgrowth of its agony,
The compensation of its pains.
In meekness, which suspects no wrong,
In patience, which endures control,
In faith, which makes the spirit strong,
In peace and purity of soul."*

The present effects are but the pledge of the future glory. Without that promise and prospect of the compensation and readjustment which is to be, the world would be so incomplete and unintelligible that we should despair. The whole course of nature, the whole state of creation points to that great and glorious restitution when God shall wipe away all tears from off all faces; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things shall be passed away.

To see once more our beloved face to face, and to know that there are no partings yonder; to gaze at the perfect beauty of the Lord in whom we have believed; to speak with Him and worship Him; to know that the long struggle of human life and human trial is passed away for ever; to be free from all the infirmities of the corruptible body; to have all misunderstandings cleared up, all difficulties solved, all mysteries revealed; that is the life which God has revealed to us hereafter;

* Thomas C. Upham.

that is a bliss in which present sorrow, however heavy, will be altogether swallowed up and forgotten. To this, the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus, may God in His infinite mercy bring us all!

CHRIST'S LAW OF UNSELFISHNESS

"Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God; and let the Lord do that which is good in His sight!"

1 *Chronicles* xix. 13.

Preached before the University of Cambridge, Sunday, January 22nd, 1893.

CHRIST'S LAW OF UNSELFISHNESS.

THERE is a difference between university life and that which is outside; not because the world is not here as it is everywhere, but because you form a society of your own, with distinct objects and marked characteristics which are in themselves a safeguard against lower and less abstract pursuits. It would be interesting to you, my younger brothers, if, after an absence of twenty years from all the blended associations which help to make up your existence in this place, you should have returned to it with the accumulated impressions of the hard and ceaseless struggles of the world outside. Many of the ideals which you had properly formed in the society of high and pure thinkers would have received rude and serious shakes. When we have first been drinking from the fountains of learning and philosophical speculation, it is common to most of us, I think, to feel the impulse of a chivalrous zeal for redressing wrongs, a strong hopefulness that we may be useful and effective in the world, a golden belief that, if people would only listen to us, many things would be better than they are. "The true spirit of chivalry is a generous impatience of wrong, an active sympathy with the oppressed, an unquenchable fury against the oppressor, a general protection of the weak against the guilty and the

powerful;" and there is much of it left in our day. Most of us probably have had our own ideals, some of them nobler than others. As we look out into the great field of the world's action the way to improvement seems to us, when we are as yet undisappointed, wonderfully clear. Certain things need to be said, or to be done, and then everybody will fall into line, and the great people of whom we are units will go forward with gladness and renewed strength. We look forth from our castle walls in the brightness of our youth on the vast mass of toiling and sorrowing men and women in the crowded city outside, and the buoyancy of our spirit makes everything smile like a sweet spring morning. There they are, in their ignorance and stupidity, following the false object, doing the wrong thing, thinking the foolish thought; and we can make them happy and wise. Whether our thoughts lie towards the political, the social, the moral, or the religious, we have learnt it all; it is fresh in our minds; we have been initiated into the treasures of wisdom, and are ready to tell the world just what it ought to know.

Alas! when we have been down in the thick of the press we find the grim truth of the words of the sage, "that ideals can never be completely embodied in practice. Ideals must ever lie a great way off, and we will thankfully content ourselves with any not intolerable approximation thereto." In spite of the advance of God's kingdom the world is, as it always has been, much more wickedly perverse than we ever supposed possible. It astonishes us by its unreasonableness. Its evil is not merely the self-abandonment of lasciviousness, which once seemed to us the measure of

that which is worst; but it is its hard grasping selfishness that strikes us, its freezing, sneering indifference; its scorn of sympathy; its cruel and deliberate cultivation of cynicism; its wilful blindness where it does not choose to see. The din is greater than we expected, and our little voices are hardly heard. And there are others with their plans, different from ours, all competing for recognition—the Positivist, the Materialist, the Socialist, the Romanist, the Liberationist, the Agnostic, the agitator, the revolutionist. More they are than could be named, and they are all in earnest, and they do not care a snap for us and our aspirations. We all discover that we can do less than we hoped. Life has, indeed, wonderfully more than we calculated in the infinite variety of its experiences; but, ah, how much less than we imagined in its achievements and performances!

And ought we, therefore, to lose our confidence of determination, our directness of aim, our zeal of activity? Have we any right to falter and hang back, and to harbour the lurking suspicion that our labour is in vain, and that we are fools not to indulge ourselves with the selfishness of the world? My brothers, the message which I have ventured in all humility and diffidence and self-reproach to take upon myself the enormous privilege of coming here to offer you to-day is the very reverse.

It is true indeed that for our own spiritual good the Almighty Being has to teach to each of us the lesson that of us individually He has no need, and that if our earthly existence should cease to-morrow, He has others ready who would take our place in the ranks, who would do our work far better than we, so that we should never

be missed; but it is no less certain that the cause to which we, as Christians, have devoted ourselves is, beyond all measurement, the strongest and best force in our contemporary life, combining in itself all that is anywhere true and good. The world is not yet converted from its poor, imperfect, foolish, sinful ways; but, for all that, it is simply the plain scientific fact that it is our Lord who is moulding, more thoroughly than ever before, the best life of the country. We have no reason whatever to suppose that before the end comes there will ever be a time on earth when the majority of men in any of the nations will have submitted to the yoke of Christ. It should be great matter for rejoicing to us that there are enough in our day to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

And that is probably now more the case than it was at any time in the past. It is our Lord who has given us personal purity, the ideal of the dignity of marriage, the beauty of home life. It is our Lord who has set free the slave, as it was promised that He should; He has abolished the old licentious and brutal sports which were once the joy of civilisation, and has taught us the dignity of even the humblest labour. Not only in His kingdom but wherever the influence of His sway is felt, the neglect and exposure of children is impossible. Their position in the human family has been wholly changed; "Their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven."

It is our Lord who has infused the principle of humanity into law, discouraged the madness of warfare, and prepared the way for peaceful and judicious arbitration. It is He who has bestowed on mankind the gift of the true liberty, the true equality, the true brother-

hood. By teaching the principle of stewardship to God for every possession, He has given us the real cure for the disproportions which startle us in the distribution of wealth. By impressing us with the importance of every human soul, and the need of self-respect, prudence, and personal effort, He has discountenanced pauperism. If the basest forms of vice are not yet absolutely forgotten, He has made them hide in dark and hateful lairs of secrecy. Before his glorious arm and flaming sword personal feuds and private wars have disappeared, and wager of battle, and ordeal, and the duel; torture is fled, and wrecking and piracy. He it is to whom the world owes the benignant rest of the first day, the cleansing of the prisons, the humanisation of punishments, the thought of the rights of animals, the crusade against intemperance, impurity, gambling, and every kind of degradation.

It is our Lord who builds every one of our countless hospitals and asylums, who provides for the widow, the fatherless, and the stranger, who is making the deaf hear, and the dumb speak, and the lame to leap, and the foul to be cleansed, and the ignorant to grasp the power of knowledge, and the idiot to have some glimmer of hope, and the harlot to be exorcised, and the deformed and despicable to be treated with honour and pity. In every one of those innumerable philanthropic agencies which are the glory of our age it is the inspiration of our Lord that is the motive power. In His name we claim justice and truth, and self-sacrifice, and public spirit, and purity in public life as well as in private; under His sanction we rebuke dishonour, falsehood, prevarication, crookedness and corruption in our public men. In spite of the dead selfishness of the world, and

its tendency constantly to relapse, never probably was benevolence so active, earnest and discriminating; never were ideals so lofty and intelligent. And we, as the sworn servants of Christ, whatever obstacles we may find in the way of working out our own schemes —and good is it for us that those obstacles should be there—can indeed rejoice greatly, and lift up our heads, and thank the Lord of all lords; for His mercy endureth for ever! Whatever may be the issue of our narrow personal ideals, we can say with absolute trust, "Let the Lord do that which is good in His sight!"

Amongst all the puzzles and perplexities and personal failures which are inseparable from that imperfect and tentative condition of fallen humanity in which we find ourselves, it is not too much to say, as a matter of positive experience, that to us, as long as we are true to the simple faith and example of our Lord, every day brings inestimable happiness and satisfaction. And those divine blessings, the purest that man can enjoy, are all the more real because they are unsought. Of all the aids to faith the witness of our own conscience is, perhaps, the most powerful; but it is not so much of faith that I wish to speak to you to-day as of the conduct of life. "If any man will do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine." The great word that our Lord has for each and all of us is Unselfishness. It is abrogation of self in aim, ambition, purpose, thought, and daily practice; in things great as well as things small. It is an old lesson, but it is ever fresh, because by nature we are sure to refuse it, and to the world it is absolutely repugnant. It is there that lies the secret of the world's failure; it is there

that shines forth the undying vitality of our Lord and of His Cross.

Unless you can teach this paramount truth to your youth at your public schools, your education is largely thrown away. He becomes hard, cynical, self-indulgent, a lover of pleasure, an unscrupulous votary of amusement, a slave of fashion, feverishly athirst for excitement. All sin is selfishness. Wherever our highest class devotes itself to voluptuousness and forgets its lofty duties, its incalculable opportunities, it is selfishness that is the poison at work. Wherever the middle class shows its materialism and vulgarisation, its scorn of noble thought and high generosity, it is because it has never learnt the divine attraction of Him who pleased not Himself. Wherever the lower class is brutal, impatient, coarse, grasping, intemperate, uncontrolled, it is because they have never given a thought to the meaning of the life of Him who took upon Him the form of a servant, and spent His whole life in going about doing good. Wherever politicians are reckless in aim and crooked in method, it is because they have never realised that the true kingdom is not of this world, that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth, and that righteousness, justice, temperance, honesty, and unity are the best policy for any people. Wherever parties rage each against the other, and snatch advantages, and exult in victories, and breed disunion, it is because they have never understood that our Lord will never agree to be confined and limited, so that men should be able to say "Lo here!" or "Lo there!" but His kingdom is within us, in our hearts and in our lives.

From the mistakes and follies, the false ideals and rash judgments, the misspent energies and misguided enthusiasms of the world, we turn with relief to the calm and dispassionate life of a great Christian university. If the younger of my hearers are full, as is the prerogative of their age, with generous and untried impulses, the elder have something of that knowledge and experience of the world which I have suggested, but which, while it brings sobriety and sometimes sadness, adds the great gift of wisdom. It is the combination of both which, in a sphere primarily devoted to learning, is the invaluable contribution that you are making to the national well-being. Here you can inculcate and practise that serene moderation in temper without which controversy becomes mere vulgar jangling, and politics the wretched pursuit of personal ends. "In any controversy, the instant we feel angry we have already ceased striving for truth, and begun striving for ourselves." Here—while outside, few are strong enough to resist the worship of wealth and the passion for a display—you can hold up to the nation the exalted example of unworldliness in life, of days sufficiently interesting without the excitements of dissipation, of respect—not for birth in itself, nor for wealth in itself, nor for any mere personal advantage—but for supremacy in intellect and virtue. Here you can promote that thoroughness of research into things practical and theoretical which is a perpetual rebuke to the superficiality, the hastiness, the emptiness and impetuosity of the world. And instead of being content to take a mere utilitarian advantage of the passing opportunity, or with lines of conduct that are second-best or even third, mere shabby shifts and lazy

submissions to expedience, it is your high function in all things to uphold the ideal, and never to rest satisfied with anything short of the noblest perfection attainable.

Such seems, to us outside, the charm and the function of university life. And if from the recollection of my own experience I may venture to offer to those who are still under education an application of these principles of unselfishness, I would say to you, my brothers—what is often very difficult for you to remember in the manifold machinery of reasonable and delightful but unnecessary occupations that surround you—that the one form of self-denial which is imperatively desirable for you is thoroughness of preparation for that sphere of life, whatever it may be, to which you will be afterwards called. Opportunities for every other kind of pursuit will recur again and again through life; these few priceless years of mental discipline and equipment will never return. The future of each of you is of more importance than you suspect; if you do not store your mind here with all that can be taught you, that future will be maimed and marred. The time will soon be upon you when the monotonous details of business or the engrossing preoccupations of social engagements will swathe you round with a thousand petty bonds, and you will lament in vain those golden hours which were offered you for real, deep, untransitory study. Do not allow even the spell of comradeship to invade this, the first and best of all your privileges. Let no eagerness for actuality persuade you to anticipate practical life in things pastoral, social, or political. Be patient, self-controlled, self-denying. A day will come when all these things will be your duty. Your duty

now is the laying of the most solid foundation for the future that is possible to your capacities. So best can you serve your country.

Then, when you leave these quiet scenes, how different will be your activities! It is sometimes said that, now that the most unlettered of the people have in their hands the whole semblance of political power, the function of the educated classes will be gone. Prophecies are made that the democracy, as it gradually awakes to its apparently unlimited possibilities, will destroy the existing system, overthrow the institutions of the Christian religion, and work out for itself the bare morality of a hard and hopeless materialism. Never were prognostications more false or faithless. Power does not reside in the multiplicity of votes, but in the force of truth. The counting of heads is not the estimate of brains. The hundreds of thousands of the working people, with all their merits and hopes, have little scope for independent study and thought. They are peculiarly susceptible to the impressions of genius, and ready to be led by those who have intelligence superior to their own, and who are masters of their subjects. It is here that the opportunity waits for educated men who are fired by unselfish love of their country.

Probably never before were there so many questions to be settled which need trained thought and patient investigation. There are all the challenges which have been given in the relations of labour and capital, conflicting theories of education, the painful phenomena of overcrowding in great cities, possibilities of colonisation, the social life of the poor, the difficulties of the free immigration of foreign paupers,

the rivalry between trades unions and free labour, the seductive fallacies of Socialism, the extinction or mitigation of pauperism, the best means of promoting thrift and temperance—all these questions are enough to absorb the best energies of the wisest, most patient, most zealous, and most unselfish of patriots. And to those to whom matters ecclesiastical present attraction, the present epoch offers a sufficient array of important problems: the definition of the Church, the meaning of the word Catholic, the extent and limits of the authority of the Church, its relation to the written Word, its adaptation to the wants of the people, its importance as a principle of national union, its function in promoting mutual understanding amongst different bodies of Christians, its perpetual protest against error and bigotry, its ceaseless desire for conciliation, the interpretation of its true spirit, its uncompromising war against intolerance and superstition—these are surely points which will one day deserve your closest attention, your most self-denying devotion.

"Let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people!" My brothers, the call is indisputable, the opportunities unprecedented, the reward immeasurable. Great are the works which our Lord has done for us in the days of which our fathers have told us, and in the old time before them. We have found His Word the truest of all messages to our own souls. He is gone into the spiritual world, the world of reality, and we see Him at present no more; but we know Him of a truth in countless ways to be the Head of His Church, in whom the whole body, fitly framed and knit together, through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh

the increase unto the building up of itself in love. He has given us this true secret of happiness in unselfish love of the brethren. Oh, you who have the privilege of being on the highest level of our Christian civilisation, by the fulfilment of the purpose of your own lives, by your desire of daily peace, by all your generous instincts, by the glorious past of your country, by the multitudinous necessities of her ever-increasing greatness, by your loyalty to your Master, I call upon you to rise to the highest ideal of unselfishness, and devote all your powers and energies to the good of your people!

CHRIST'S LAW OF PURITY.

"And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord."

St. Luke ii. 22.

Preached at St. Paul's Cathedral, Sunday, the Feast of the Purification February 2nd, 1890.

CHRIST'S LAW OF PURITY.

THE solemn annual remembrance of the Purification is a festival dear unconsciously to the heart of every mother who calls herself Christian, however humble her station may be, however ignorant her intelligence. There is no ceremony which has taken more unrelaxing hold of the working classes than the thanksgiving of women after childbirth; and these familiar domestic rites are in direct succession to that fortieth day after the birth of our Lord when the simple peasant mother, acting on the faithful tradition of her royal ancestry, presented herself with her babe for their purification in the Temple at Jerusalem. Until that time she could not leave her house. The circumcision had taken place on the eighth day after the Nativity, and was a private rite, performed at Bethlehem, doubtless by Joseph himself, as head of the little obscure family. The idea of the purification of the Hebrew women, according to the divinely sagacious instinct of the ancient law of Moses, was that, though human affections were dear to the Almighty, although the family tie was the unit appointed by Himself as the beginning of all religion, and the true glory of all social arrangements, yet in the imperfect condition of human nature there remains

much that is unlovely even in that which is best, and there is nothing in the changes and chances of human life which warns us more emphatically of our strange inheritance from the dust and from the lower forms of the creation than the pains and humiliations of childbearing.

After all such reminders of human infirmity and earthliness, the soul of our Hebrew ancestresses in that ancient Church from which we are all spiritually sprung was to be braced for their high responsibilities as wife and mother by atonement before God, by the expression of devout gratitude for the lovingkindness of His providence, and by obtaining the renewal of His blessing and favour on their return to all the little calls and events of their daily duties. And in the case of a first-born son, he was of old institution dedicated to the service of God and of His Temple; and as the Levites had since been appointed to those offices, he must be solemnly presented before the Almighty, and solemnly redeemed. Mary, doubtless, had in this case less need for purification, nor could any change take place in the spiritual condition of the Son of God by being presented in the Temple. But until, by His sacrifice, His resurrection and ascension, He had founded His new and more spiritual kingdom of Heaven upon earth, in which all the ancient rites and ceremonies were to be fulfilled by moral obligation and closer spiritual relationship to the Divine Father, the religion appointed for His people was the Hebrew institutions under the ancient laws of Moses; and these, throughout His life, He and His delighted to obey. And as everything that He did has for us a moral significance of the highest and most precious

significance, so it is not without point that St. Luke takes pains to record for us the purification of Mary and the presentation of her Son in the Temple. It is not without an appropriateness which has its bearing on our hard, busy, matter-of-fact lives at the present day, that Simeon and Anna were inspired to make the occasion memorable by their adoring recognition of the Saviour of the world in the feeble little newborn child before them, and by their prophetic utterances. It is not without a fitting impressiveness that the ancient Church made much of this event, and kept a day holy in yearly remembrance of its teaching. For that teaching draws our attention to the fact that the consecration of all our affections to Almighty God, the hallowing of all our ties by His laws, the deliberate aim after purity in thought and word and deed, are matters of supreme critical importance to the Christian life.

There was long ago an appropriate ceremony, suitable, no doubt, to a simple and primitive age, but wholly impossible to a complex and multitudinous form of civilisation, of which there is one faint lingering echo in the popular appellation of this festival as Candlemas Day. Candles were universally carried about in popular recognition of the truth that in all things, in purity especially, we members of the kingdom of Christ are bound to shine as lights before the world; in symbolical appeal at the same time to the lamp of a spotless and innocent life, kept, by the grace of God, always quietly and steadily burning. In the year 790 A.D., one of the chief glories of Early English Christianity, the learned Alcuin of York, afterwards the ornament of the court of Charles the Great in Germany, described

in a homily how the whole multitude of some Christian city, collecting together, devoutly celebrate the solemnity of Holy Communion, bearing a vast number of wax lights; and none enters any public place in the city without a taper in his hand. And in the year 1153, St. Bernard wrote how in his day all Christians went in procession, two by two, bearing candles in their hands, which were lighted, not at a common fire, but by one first consecrated in church for the purpose; how they that went out first returned last, and all the way they sang, "Great is the glory of the Lord;" how they went two by two in commendation of charity and of a social life, for so our Saviour sent out His disciples; how they carried lights in their hands—first, to signify that our light should shine before men; secondly, that the thing which they did that day was especially in memory of the Wise Virgins, of whom the mother of the Saviour might be called the chief, that went to meet their Lord with lamps lit and burning. And he went on to show how from that usage, and from the many lights set up in the church that day, it was called Candlemas: that because our works should all be done in the holy fire of charity, therefore, the candles were lit with fire symbolically holy; how they that went out first returned last to teach humility, in honour preferring one another. Because God loved a cheerful giver, therefore they sang all the way. The procession itself was to teach them that we should not stand idle in the way of life, but go from strength to strength, not looking back to that which is behind, but reaching forward to that which is before, even the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus.

These ceremonies are no longer possible, needful, or desirable. Christianity has little ceremonial; it has forms, for forms are essential to order; but it does not attempt to reinforce the religion of the heart by the distractions of the mind. "Of such ceremonies as be used in the Church," says our Book of Common Prayer, "and have had their beginning by the institution of man, some at the first were of godly intent and purpose devised, and yet at length turned to vanity and superstition; some entered into the Church by indiscreet devotion, and such a zeal as was without knowledge; and for because they were winked at in the beginning, they grew daily to more and more abuses, which not only for their unprofitableness, but also because they have much blinded the people, and obscured the glory of God, are worthy to be cut away, and clean rejected. Others there be which, although they have been devised by man, yet it is thought good to reserve them still, as well for a decent order in the Church (for the which they were at first devised) as because they pertain to edification, whereunto all things done in the Church (as the Apostle teacheth) ought to be referred." The picturesque customs of Candlemas Day have not been amongst those that were maintained. It is easy to imagine their abuse, and to suppose that few of those who carried the tapers were themselves shining lights or had any remembrance at all of the moral of the burning lamp.

But never can we afford to pass over anything that reminds us forcibly and specially of our great primary Christian duties. Certainly in the present age we have little reason to regard the festival of the purification of our affections, and the presentation of our

bodies as a living sacrifice to God, as in any degree superfluous. I do not suppose that any in this church are in any intellectual doubt as to the absolute strictness of the moral law of Christ's kingdom, or as to its imperative and wholesome necessity. And I can well believe that in practice their long and faithful devotion to the service of Christ has been rewarded by the gift of continence and self-control. It is probable that you, and such as you, find little temptation in irregular indulgence, or sexual imaginations. God has given you the grace to recognise that the spiritual life is from its beginning a struggle between two contending forces—the earthly impulse, which would feed and develop our animal nature till we had become wholly assimilated to its various sensuous elements; and the divine impulse, which, by attracting us to all that is virtuous and truly beautiful, transforms us after the likeness of the Son of God. God has given you to understand that it is not even the unlawful indulgence or the sensual thought which is of itself so baleful, so much as its character, its motive, its degrading effect, its thraldom of the will, its magic enticements, its engrossing enchantments, which draw the soul away ever more from virtue and from God.

In common life there are some persons whose digestions are in such good order that they actually recoil with a shudder from unwholesome food. And to most people, when anything poisonous is at hand or in the air, one of their senses gives emphatic warning. Just so it is with you, happy souls, if you have had any true vision of God, for to you all uncleanness in any sense has come in some degree to be hateful. Your natures are so firmly convinced of the truth about

happiness, and your habits of rejecting the evil and choosing the good have become so strong and sincere, that in sin you find no interest, attraction or romance, but only what is frightful and repulsive. You have not forgotten how to blush at shame and wrong, and, with the ancient Greek philosopher, you agree that that is virtue's favourite colour. You know that God has given all men certain powers, gifts, and responsibilities. You see that each of these has a right and a wrong use. You see only too well that if they are misused for caprice, for passion, for self-indulgence, for wantonness, for lasciviousness, then they bring down upon the short-sighted culprit a flight of curses which are sure to come home to roost. Health you see ruined, vigour of mind and body destroyed, happiness cankered at the core, reputation blasted and withered, careers cut off, homes desolated, nations swept away. You can understand, because your sight has been illumined by the truth of Heaven, why it is that the Almighty is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, because for the welfare of His creatures, if for nothing else, universal order must be maintained, no degrading breach of it allowed or passed over, no self-destruction be brought on by self-indulgence. And so it has come about, by the great and undeserved mercy of God, that to you that yielding to the animal nature which blinds us to the glorious vision of His splendour is as odious and dreadful as the foulest mire or the deadliest fever.

But the Church of Christ in any country has not only the duty of feeding the souls of those who are its true members, of reminding them of their privileges in Christ Jesus, of recalling to them the dangers from

which they have escaped, and of raising them up to new and ever higher levels of faith and loyalty and devotion; it has, as far as may be, to lift high the standard both of faith and practice in the midst of the people. It has, as far as may be, to leaven the opinions and the habits of that vast mass of human beings who, possibly nominally Christians, are indeed Christians only in name, and who make up the aggregate of what in religious language we call the world. It has at once to try and prove to these multitudes of men and women the beauty of the more excellent way, and, for the sake of its own weaker members, to resist all attacks on public decency, whether in the streets, or the amusements of the people, or in literature, or in art, to uphold the sanctity of the home, to make evil as difficult as it can be made, and by every means and by every effort to protect ignorance and innocence, and to stem that flood of vice which in other countries, once more famous than our own, has in other ages swept name and fame and race and the very national existence into the avenging fires of the wrath of God.

The Church of Christ has great forces to contend with in this matter, and it is only the presence of her Lord that can sustain her hope and courage. In those classes which ought to be the leaders of the people in all that is noble and pure, we cannot but observe a growing devotion to material enjoyment and a widely prevalent thirst for self-indulgence, which were not so obvious in an older, a wiser, a more godly generation. The catchword of the day is the hope expressed that the friend or companion has had a good time. A day without excitement is to increasing

numbers a day lost. The sober duties of domestic life are very largely disdained. Fashionable religion is to an increasing degree a mere perfunctory attendance at some musical ceremonial which has little or no effect on morals or conscience. Can we wonder that amongst such persons self-control in obedience to the ideal of purity and the law of Christ is but little recognised?

But even in the education of our upper classes there is much to be desired. It is very largely founded on the heathen literatures of Greece and Rome, and as such literatures are naturally steeped in the pagan spirit of illicit self-indulgence, can we be surprised if, through their consummate genius, something of the tone of that spirit penetrates the hearts and minds of those whose intellectual faculties are being awakened on these lines, ready on some fitting occasion to inflame the corruption of human nature into rebellion? Then again, besides that, there is the ordinary freemasonry of men of the world, increasing in degree from age to age, who, by taking it for granted that there is no such thing as strict self-control, immensely help forward the moral decadence of each generation of young men as they are launched into life. And when we come to the opposite end of the scale, we find how completely, unless there be present some strong moral influence or curbing religious motive, the young men of the working classes both in town and country throw off the restraints of home and school, and live in a state of intermittent and very often promiscuous concubinage. In the north we have the lax idyllic spirit of Burns; in the south the careless mocking spirit of the music-halls. Literature, too, now claims largely to be independent of religion, and merely to describe nature as she is,

regardless of what she might and ought to be. In many cases, art puts forward the same pagan pretensions.

Thus the tide of laxity in principle and practice seems to rise round the Church of God; and to us in London the evil is enormously aggravated by the illimitable vastness of this huge unmanageable province of houses. It is large enough to cover any amount of vice; and the vicious meet together and encourage each other in their irregularities in almost overwhelming forces. No public opinion breathes on the turpitude of our streets, or helps the young and ignorant in the battle with his own temptations. More seriously then, and more continuously than ever, are we each of us bound to maintain amongst our friends and acquaintance, in the solemn language of the fathers of our Church, that a life of purity is alone worthy of a being created in the image of God; that for Christians the obligation to strict self-control rests on the sacredness of the body as the temple of the Holy Ghost; that strict self-control in single life is not only commanded by God, but is the only healthy condition; that there is no difference between sex and sex in the moral responsibility for irregularity, but that on the man. as the stronger of will, must lie the heavier blame; that none known to be living an irregular life ought to be received as a Christian into Christian society; that on the upholding of the sanctity of marriage depends the moral health of the nation.*

* Pastoral of the Lambeth Conference, 1888.

CHRIST'S LAW OF MODERATION.

"Let your moderation be known unto all men."
Philippians iv. 5.

Preached in Westminster Abbey on December 19th, 1880.

CHRIST'S LAW OF MODERATION.

GREAT as was the personal authority of the Apostles, they were not without their troubles in the management of the churches. It was necessary for Paul to exhort Titus to put his people in mind to be subject to ministers and governments, to obey magistrates, not to allow any headstrong temper to interrupt their readiness for good works, not to be eager with their tongues in depreciating others, not to be always throwing down the gage of combat, but to act in a spirit of gentle forbearance, not standing obstinately on their rights, showing all courteous mildness to all sorts of men. The Apostles themselves, Paul and the others, had known in past times what it was to have this temper of arrogant folly, this disposition to disobedience; they, too, had been deceived by self-importance. They had followed their own whims and caprices, and defied others to interfere with them. They had lived in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. They could sympathize with the weakness of those of their people among whom this growth of unregenerate days had not been eradicated. It was not till the goodness and the tenderness of God our Saviour towards men had appeared that they had themselves learnt the beauty of the Christian character.

So difficult, indeed, it seems to have been to teach them at once to distinguish between the motives and actions of the world and of the kingdom of Christ, that even the chief officers of the little new religious communities were directly and specially exhorted not to be combative, to avoid conflict, to be animated by this willingness to forego their personal rights.

James, in writing to the churches at large, was at great pains to point out to them the ideal of the new kind of temper. The man who exhibited it would not be the yielding, nerveless object of contempt that the world would think him. On the contrary, he would be, of all men, the one really wise and endued with true knowledge. His work would be that, with a fair and unimpeachable behaviour in all things as his background, he would look to his acts to argue for him in the peacefulness of perfect good sense. If they had the spirit of bitter zeal or disputatiousness in their hearts, there was every reason to be ashamed. By such conduct they gave the truth the direct lie. They might think such a disposition marvellously ingenious and clever. They might gloat, smile, and rub their hands over their successes. But let them know that they were exhibiting the most unmistakable characteristics of the world, the flesh, and the devil. All their ingenuity was earthly, carnal, devilish. Wherever bigoted zeal might be, wherever disputatiousness, there, as a matter of course, James would show them not only the lawless and confusing spirit of sedition, but every evil work. The wisdom that was really not of the earth, not of man's fallen nature, not of the devil, the wisdom that actually did come from

above, the only wisdom that could be called Christian, this was first in itself holy, upright, impartial; then in each and all of its outward manifestations quiet and peaceable, mild and forbearing, not requiring authoritative commands but listening to reasonable persuasion, full of compassion for the feelings of others, full of wholesome fruits, absolutely free from partisanship, absolutely free from all disingenuousness or insincerity.

You might suppose that I was merely thinking of one class—the intellectual; I am not: nor did St. Peter think they alone stood in need of these exhortations. He addresses also a very different class of society; even to household servants, who from their situation had little chance of redress for misunderstandings, St. Peter commands this same unexacting habit of mind. They were to obey their masters with all fear; not merely the good and equitable, but also the wayward; for this is Christian grace, if a man, in order to do his duty to God, even when he has not really done anything wrong, puts up with personal vexations.

And St. Paul, when he wishes to make the strongest appeal of which he can think to the loyalty of those Corinthian converts in whom, perhaps, he took the deepest interest because they gave him the most trouble, can imagine no more powerful and penetrating argument than that gentleness and reasonable forbearance which was the chief characteristic of our Lord Jesus Christ.

With what perfect dignity and wisdom our Lord Himself had always moved, with what complete and

unprecedented success He had carried out His plan, and founded His kingdom, and yet how little He had claimed for Himself! "The words which I speak unto you"; "the works which my Father hath given Me to do";—the power of truth, the power of goodness—these were His credentials. He seems even to have smiled at the small amount of force He was using. He called His method of founding His kingdom a little leaven, hardly seen, hardly noticed. He called it a grain of mustard-seed, one of the least of nature's germs. Yet He knew all the while that this little would leaven the whole lump, that this small seed would have a mighty growth. So that He sealed His life by the sacrifice of His blood, so that He conquered death by His resurrection, so that He fixed for ever the belief in the future life, so that He gathered round Him a faithful few who would hand on the record of His sayings and doings—for the rest He did not care.

He came not to strive or cry. He raised no finger against the religious institutions of His nation; He was born but to give those institutions their crowning interpretation. He waged no war against sect or party; He contented Himself with rebuking that sort of personal and essential quality from which sprang the evils of the day. He did not force His teaching or His beneficence on any; when they besought Him, He departed out of their coasts. When one city would not hear Him, He passed on to another. He often lamented that His power of doing good was limited by their unwillingness to receive and believe Him. Few startling wonders were performed by Him. There may have been many who would have been glad to receive

back their dead; yet our narratives represent Him as only raising three to life. No doubt the whole world could hardly have held the books that would have been written had all His words been transcribed; but He has been content that we should have only four short memoirs. He knew that there was nothing of what He told us which we should carry out to the full; so He saw that these brief records would be all that we should want. How loyal He was to constituted authority!—attending regularly the feasts, distasteful as the actual condition of the Temple must often have been to Him, and paying the legal dues. How gentle He was to His raging adversaries; how calm, mild, and courteous to His pliable judge; how meek and compassionate to His faithless followers and His cruel executioners! Throughout His whole earthly life, thirty years of which He thought right to spend in obscurity, He set the most perfect example of this spirit of gentleness, reasonable forbearance, restful confidence in the victory of the truth, trust in the capacity of His Father to do all things well in His own time, indifference to fame and immediate success, mildness, meekness, contentment in waiving His rights and claims and powers, peacefulness, humility, the wisdom that is not of the earth but from above.

And St. Paul himself, fiery as he was, how deeply he drank of the same spirit! What a humble estimate he had of his own importance! While the world was waiting to be evangelised, he was willing to stay two or three years in one place, if so it seemed right. Much of the time that was so valuable to mankind he spent in supporting himself by his trade when he might have

insisted on maintenance from his past converts to enable him to go again and again among ever fresh fields.

Instead of adopting any unbending rule of practice and conduct he loved to become all things to all men if he might save some. How humble and modest he was in his dealings with his churches his own eloquent epistles record. Instead of rebuke, remonstrance; instead of dogmatic direction, tender warnings to beloved sons; firmness everywhere and always about the broad grand truths he was commissioned to deliver, but the utmost adaptiveness to times and circumstances, the greatest gentleness and self-denial, willingness to eat no meat while the world standeth if he made his brother to offend, urgent insistence that no liberty should be a stumbling-block to them that were weak; seeking not his own, bearing all things, enduring all things; preaching not himself, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and himself the servant of the churches for Jesus' sake; taking care to do nothing to spoil the Word, but by manifestation of the simple truth commending himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Looking upon himself as working together with the unruffled tranquillity of the Almighty, it was by much patience, by simplicity, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by love unfeigned that he proved his ministry, and did his immortal work.

And are we so perfect in all the graces of the Christian walk that the teaching of this season, as year by year it comes round, is no longer needed? Is it not often the case that if a man is but orthodox in his belief, and careful against any literal breach of the

Commandments, he does not ask himself whether he is realising in his life the Spirit of Christ? And yet if any man have not that spirit he is none of His.

How strange it would seem if a Paul or a James were among us to analyze for us the quarrels, the schisms, the struggles of the past history of Christendom, through which every year nevertheless these words have been sounding, or to unfold the perplexities of the wars and fightings that are among us now! How clearly he would show the disastrous evils of immoderate self-importance—the danger of developing some favourite side of our nature, or some one special aspect of truth at the expense of others, and insisting urgently upon them—the peril to truth and peace and godliness of allowing successive single ideas to dominate and arrogate to themselves an unreasonable necessity! He would explain how from this thoughtless and passionate spirit every heresy had sprung, the heresies of Rome no less than the heresies of Arius and Sabellius and Nestorius and Eutyches. Penetrating the secret springs of human weakness, he would teach us how all dissents from the general body of Christians arose, because either one side or the other exaggerated some particular view or thought to the pitch of exclusiveness and isolation. He would point out how, through the past eighteen centuries of political life, wherever party had engendered intemperate zeal, and wherever that zeal had degenerated into strife, the strife often ending in an appeal to the sword, it was just because this unyielding, self-confident spirit of egotistic insistence on personal opinions, this refusal to admit that there may be two sides to a question, this determination to

push to the end the interests of a particular class or party or view, had not been crushed by the gentle reasonableness and forbearance, the abstention from pressing any personal right or claim, the refusal to take advantage of others, which are the marks of the Spirit of Christ. He would show us, too, how even in intellectual matters this characteristic defect has worked havoc. He would explain how alienation from Christ and God may be the result of pushing too far the right of imaginative criticism; by looking, for instance, at difficulties and objections through magnifying lenses of the largest power, while for the evidences and probabilities is used the large end of a telescope clouded by prepossession.

Much, no doubt, of that want of peaceful moral progress, for which we are, perhaps, to blame ourselves as much as anybody, that waste of wholesome energy on the friction of party spirit, which as Christians we most heartily deplore, is owing to this temper of bigotry for an idea, this lack of self-discipline, this neglect (in favour of misguided and obstinate enthusiasm) of the most obvious Christian morality, of the very primary lessons of the Christian disposition. So we help to swell false currents of thought and practice. So we shock the feelings of intelligent observers and make the Christian life to them a needless difficulty. So we mar the peace which Christ bequeathed us. So we introduce the weakness of disunion into the kingdom of Heaven. So we prevent the grand and ever-growing force of harmony. We obscure truth with clouds of retaliation and false issues and meaningless controversies. We set up false standards of right and

wrong. We blunt, in striking each other, the weapons of our warfare against evil in ourselves and in the world.

Would that the thought that the Lord is at hand might make us more careful about our own moderation and forbearance, as St. Paul hoped it would make his friends at Philippi! We know not, indeed, how near the day of the Lord may be to each of us; all that we are certain of is that the night is at hand when no man can work. The time is, at any rate, upon us when we are reminded once more of that momentous event in the history of the world which inaugurated what was to be the reign of peace on earth and goodwill towards men. If that is more to us than an empty phrase, if we do care for the good of others, if we do long to achieve something for the spread of that most glorious empire over the hearts of men, then we shall withdraw our thoughts as far as possible from petty and temporary strifes, and concentrate them more than we have ever hitherto done on God and on the simpler truths of religion. We shall try to draw into ourselves in thought and in deed more and more of the example of the gentle Saviour of the world. We shall do our utmost to get rid of this calamitous self-importance, remembering that Christianity does not depend on ourselves or our miserable parties. We shall pay more attention than we have done to self-discipline, lest in what we fancy to be holy things the evil spirit make us his own. We shall pay more respect for the advice and the warning of age and experience, instead of believing ourselves to be sages, prophets, and regenerators. Instead of headstrong and wilful impulsiveness, that unreasonable

intenseness and impetuous zeal, which many are bold enough even to cultivate, we shall welcome among all the standard of the well-balanced, conscientious, truth-loving mind. Tempestuous haste, and railing denunciation, and exacting selfishness we shall avoid as the signs of the spirit that is not from above, but which is earthly, unregenerate, devilish. Every day we shall secure time for quiet thought and reflection and review and taking stock of ourselves and our position in the kingdom of Heaven. Recognising the many-sidedness of truth, we shall never insist that we are its exclusive possessors.

And is it not a noble thing to struggle for, this kingdom of peace and forbearance and goodwill and tranquillity? If we believe in Christ, is it not a terrible wrong that we are doing if, by our hatreds and unwarrantable insistence on our own fancies, we are delaying its approach? If others must use carnal weapons for their warfare, shall it not be ours to use those that are indeed mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, even that forbearing and apostolic love which casteth down imaginations and everything that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ?

Let me remind you of a wholesome counsel which we may borrow from one who knew not Christ in the flesh :—

> "There is a story told
> In Eastern tents when autumn nights grow cold;
> And round the fire the Mongol shepherds sit
> With grave responses listening unto it.

Once on the errands of his mercy bent,
Buddha, the holy and benevolent,
Met a fell monster, huge and fierce of look,
Whose awful voice the hills and forests shook.
'O son of peace,' the giant cried, 'thy fate
Is sealed at last, and love shall yield to hate!'
The unarmed Buddha, looking with no trace
Of fear or anger in the monster's face,
With pity said, 'Poor fiend, even thee I love!'
Lo, as he spake the sky-tall terror sank
To hand-breadth size; the huge abhorrence shrank
Into the form and fashion of a dove;
And where the thunder of its rage was heard
Brooding above him sweetly sang the bird.
'Hate hath no harm for love,' so rang the song,
'And peace, unweaponed, conquers every wrong!'"

CHRIST AND THE DAY OF REST.

"That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."
1 *St. Peter* iv. 11.

Preached at St. Paul's Cathedral, July, 1892.

CHRIST AND THE DAY OF REST.

NOTHING is more remarkable in the first epistle of the great Apostle from whose letter I have quoted than the fact that, while he shows himself a genuine Israelite, his teaching is directly opposed to the yoke of Judaism, and he makes little or no reference to the Jewish law. He is the leader of the school which, while vindicating the importance of both law and Gospel, puts the superiority of the Gospel on its true basis, the truth that it is the spiritual development of the law. Notice how all his practical injunctions are drawn not from Jewish, but from Christian principles and ways, from the precepts, example, life, death, and resurrection, and future coming of Christ. Not a word in this epistle is said by the Apostle of the circumcision, of the perpetual obligation, the dignity, or even the bearings of the Mosaic law. He is full of the Old Testament; his style and thoughts are charged with its imagery, but it is in the light of the Gospel that he contemplates and applies its teaching; he regards the privileges and glories of the ancient people of God entirely in their spiritual development in the Church of Christ.

It has been well pointed out how great is the importance of this fact. For it shows how utterly opposed

the teaching of the original Apostles themselves was to that Judaistic narrowness which the rationalists have imputed to all the early followers of the Lord Jesus Christ except St. Paul. As a matter of truth, there are more traces of what are called Judaising views, more of sympathy with national hopes, not to say prejudices, in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians than in the writings of St. Peter. In this epistle we see the Jew who has been born again, and has exchanged what St. Peter himself calls the unbearable yoke of the law for the liberty which is in Christ.

The particular point of the law which I propose to examine this morning as having issued in a more spiritual observance, is the strict hallowing of the seventh day. Must not a devout adherent to the Puritan Sabbath be as much puzzled to discover no allusion to his favourite doctrine throughout the Epistles of the New Testament, as the stout believer in the Mass of the Romish Church must be perplexed at finding no mention of the supreme importance of his absorbing tenet? The fact is that in primitive apostolical times there is the clearest evidence that amongst the Christians who had been Jews there continued a lingering devotion to the memories and associations of their childhood, at the very same time that they were beginning to have peculiar affection for the first day of the week; while the Christians who had been Gentiles never thought of observing the seventh day at all, but found all that they wanted in the religious meetings, the breaking of the bread, and the blessing of the cup, which, on the first day of the week, commemorated the resurrection of the Lord.

There never was any formal transference of the severe rules of the one day to the natural and spontaneous happiness of the other.

It was not till the famous Edict of Constantine in the year 321 that the idea of labour was formally dissociated from the Lord's Day. Its memorable words you would like to hear, for to it we cannot be too warmly grateful: "On the venerable Day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in the work of cultivation may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits; because it often happens that another day is not so fitted for grain-sowing or for vine-planting; lest, by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of Heaven should be lost."

The Edict of Constantine was the formal and legal sanction of what already, as far as opportunity would allow, was the practice of Christians. We cannot but rejoice that by analogy something of the spirit of the ancient Hebrew day of rest grew slowly in the consciences of the Christian Church as the Hebrew day receded. The Christians in early days had not been able to make regulations about work, for a very large proportion of the whole population, especially of the Christian population, were slaves. We need not be surprised to find that the early spirit of Sunday was not so much one of abstinence from work, as a readiness for spiritual activity. But the consciousness which gradually assimilated what was best in the Hebrew obedience to the fourth commandment recognised a truth of universal importance.

The opposition of the Jews to our Lord in His

restoration of the spiritual view of the day of rest, is a serious warning to us against too strict a devotion to forms. Forms may be useful and good; but they are not religion. They exist to help religion, to produce religion; but if once they are regarded for their own sake they destroy religion. There is no limit to the absurdities to which the Jews gave way with regard to the Sabbath.* A nailed shoe might not be worn because it was a burden; an unnailed shoe was allowable. A person might go out with two shoes on, but not with only one. One man might carry a loaf of bread, but it must not be carried by two. You must not walk through a stream on stilts, for you really carried the stilts. A woman must not go forth with any ribbons about her, unless they were sewed to her dress. A false tooth must not be worn on the Sabbath day. A person with the toothache might not rinse his mouth with vinegar, but he might hold it in his mouth and swallow it. No one might write down two letters of the alphabet. The sick might not send for a physician. The preservation of life was a breaking of the Sabbath; and, on the other hand, even to kill a noxious domestic insect was as bad as killing a camel. A person with lumbago might not rub or foment the affected part. A tailor must not go out with his needle on Friday night, lest he should forget it, and so break the Sabbath by carrying it about. Shammai, a great rabbin, would not entrust a letter even to a pagan after Wednesday, lest he should not have arrived at his destination on the Sabbath. A Jew must not carry on the Sabbath even so much as a pocket-handkerchief, except within the walls of the city. If there were no walls, he must

* See Farrar's "Life of Christ."

not carry it at all. In one place, to avoid this difficulty, poles are set up at the ends of the streets, and strings stretched from the one to the other. The string represents a wall, and a conscientious Jew may carry his handkerchief anywhere within these strings. To this day the German Jews look upon it as a sin to use a stick of any kind on the Sabbath day. It is a distinct trade in the Jewish part of my archdeaconry for Gentile women to go round on the Sabbath day to stir the fires of strict and devout Jews. Formalism is, indeed, like the deadly ivy that clings to the fair and flourishing tree. It grasps it ever tighter in its embrace, until it has sapped its vigour and smothered its life. It was formalism which on many occasions succeeded in making the Jews actually dislike and condemn the holy and wonderful works of our Lord's love and power, because they were done on the seventh day.

The practice of our Lord Himself in the matter of observance is, of course, for us the only rule. On one occasion He does a deed of mercy himself, and authorises the man to do an act of necessity. In another place He tells them to judge not according to appearance, but according to the real and true meaning and reason of an act. Again, deliberately, our Lord, on the Sabbath day, healed a man who was born blind, with the very purpose of correcting the prejudices of the Jews. Another time He encouraged His disciples in satisfying their hunger on the Sabbath, pointing the difference between mercy and sacrifice, between the desire of doing good, and the mere offering of formal worship, and said with great significance that even of the Sabbath day the Son of Man was Lord, and able to modify or change it as

He pleased. By going to dinner with a Pharisee on the Sabbath day He encouraged on it innocent and quiet social intercourse.

The Jewish view was, of course, absurd. The law of not carrying burdens clearly intended the traffic of trade, and had no reference to private necessity. The rabbis were absolutely ridiculous in their burdensome restrictions and fine differences. "If any man on the Sabbath," they said, "bring in or take out anything from a public to a private place, if thoughtlessly he hath done this, he shall sacrifice for his sin; but if wilfully, he shall be cut off and shall be stoned." It was monstrous—it was intolerable. But do we run no risk now of moving towards the opposite extreme? Avoiding the ludicrous and vexatious tyranny of the Pharisees and the Puritans, are we not in some ways endangering the very existence of Sunday?

The last encyclical letter of the bishops, assembled at Lambeth in 1888, gravely calls our attention to this; and that is why, at the beginning of another London season, I have ventured to lay the subject before you this morning. "The due observance of Sunday as a day of rest, of worship, and of religious teaching has a direct bearing on the moral well-being of the Christian community. We have observed of late a growing laxity which threatens to impair its sacred character. We strongly deprecate this tendency. We call upon the leisurely classes not selfishly to withdraw from others the opportunities of rest and religion. We call upon master and employer jealously to guard the privileges of the servant and of the workman. In the Lord's Day we have a priceless heritage. Whoever misuses it incurs a terrible responsibility."

Now, the two great cardinal principles on which Sunday is founded are rest and worship. These are the permanent and spiritual results of the hallowing of the seventh day. Apart from these two the day has no title to consideration whatever. And they cannot be separated. If you keep a day merely for rest, you will find that universal amusement will soon creep in upon you, and mean universal labour. The principle of worship, of sanctity, of sacredness to God is the only principle which can protect properly the principle of rest. And, on the other hand, you cannot have a day consecrated to worship and self-recollection, and the fear of God, unless it is also a day of rest. If you make it an ordinary day with ordinary occupations then you will have neither leisure nor taste for dwelling on the realities of the unseen world.

I should like to remind you once more of the very beautiful version of the fourth commandment in the book of Deuteronomy, and once more to reiterate the wish that we could read it in our Communion Service instead of the version of the book of Exodus. "Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee; six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates, that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou." Here the observance is put on its true grounds: rest for all alike, high and low, rich and poor.

We in this country have the inestimable privilege of

living under laws the principles of which were settled when there were no Secularists, and all the nation united in respect for the Christian faith. The observance of the first day of the week as a time for rest and worship is protected by the ancient laws of the land. On the first day of the week no places of public amusement may be opened. On the first day of the week there are enactments against trading. The sanctity of the day of our Lord's resurrection is part of the recognised law of the land. There is, indisputably, a quiet calm over both town and country which contrasts with the busy operations of other days, and is to the weary spirit inexpressibly refreshing.

Now, there are two sets of people who would wish to alter this happy condition of things. There are the theorists who do not like legislation which is directly Christian, and who to a considerable extent not themselves believing in religion, would desire to abolish any regulations which recognise a revelation. And there are the selfish, irreligious, worldly people, both in high and in low life, who, having themselves no occasion to labour, are perfectly reckless as to whether their own pleasures and amusements destroy the rest of those who have to work for their convenience.

The theorists make every year a proposal, perfectly harmless in itself, for the opening on the first day of the week of museums, galleries of painting and sculpture, and libraries. Some would be content with this neutral scheme; to the more unquiet it would only be a beginning. Having obtained their wish, it requires no prophecy to see that they would soon move for the theatres, concert-halls, and the saloons for music and

dancing. If these changes were conceded, it would be no long time before the day of rest would be as completely disregarded in London as in Paris. The broad principle of a Christian nation must ever be that it is best to employ no single person unnecessarily on the day of rest. Directly you move from that principle you are on dangerous ground, and will slide far. The great majority of the nation are still Christian; and till they cease so to be those who so eagerly desire to embellish and enliven that day may reasonably be content to acquiesce in the old beneficent arrangements. The working men themselves, whose name is invoked, do not seem largely to desire the change. Many are totally indifferent about it; many, foreseeing the inroads certain to be made on their repose, are strongly opposed. Meanwhile we have a few instructive examples. Certain municipalities, after opening their museums or their libraries for a few months, found the attendance so small and diminishing that they had to close them again.

The selfish people of the world are more difficult to deal with. On the one hand they are only nominally Christian, and on the other hand it is not right for Christian people, however numerous, to force their convictions on those who are not members of the kingdom of God; but even with them, I believe if the churches would only do their duty and speak plainly, an appeal to their better nature would not be altogether useless. They are still nominally Christian, and if it were pointed out to them what great scandals and hardships they are causing, they might not impossibly be less flagrantly unmerciful. It is perfectly true that amongst worldly people the observ-

ance of the two principles of rest and worship on the first day of the week have become almost as unpopular as they were in the days of King George III. Sunday gives no break or respite to the gaieties of the week. Large parties for luncheon and dinner are becoming common in great houses, in utter disregard of the servants. Sunday driving, which ten years ago was almost unknown, is becoming frequent. The river Thames on Sunday is as crowded as a fair. Sunday is a favourite day with worldly people for starting on a journey. One club meets every Sunday evening for dancing, another for the performance of operatic and secular music. But for the loosening of the respect for Sunday the clergy are themselves to some extent to blame. We are all the subjects from time to time of the law of reaction. In the revolt which was naturally engendered by excessive Puritan strictness, it cannot be denied that after the performance of morning service many of the clergy during the last half-century have directly encouraged laxity and innovation. They are now reaping the results of their mistake, and we may be thankful that they have the candour to draw back.

For ourselves, we rejoice in esteeming the first day of the week with all the honour and all the sanctions with which it was invested by our forefathers. Thank God, they were probably much wiser than we, and we extol and magnify their wisdom. The sacred lessons of the dear home of our childhood, these we treasure up and hand on to our children as our most precious inheritance. To us "Sunday is," as Longfellow called it, "a golden clasp which binds together the volume of the week." "Sunday," said Addison, "clears away the

rust of the whole week." "It is not too much to say," said Norman Macleod, "that without the Sunday the Church of Christ could not, as a visible society, exist on earth. The observance of Sunday is a public profession of our Christian faith; by its profanation we bring disgrace on our religion, and give great scandal to our fellow-Christians." "So diseased," wrote Julius Hare, "are the appetites of those who live in what is called the fashionable world, that they mostly account Sunday a very dull day; yet of all days it is the one on which our highest faculties ought to be employed the most vigorously, and to find the deepest, most absorbing interest." "Oh, what a blessing is Sunday," exclaimed William Wilberforce, the emancipator of the slaves, "interposed between the waves of worldly business, like the divine path of the Israelites through Jordan. There is nothing in which I would advise you to be more strictly conscientious than in keeping the Sabbath day holy. I can truly declare that to me the Sabbath day has been invaluable." For ourselves, we assert that as a guide for Christians in fulfilling the spirit of the fourth commandment, nothing can be better than the old evangelical rule of works of piety, charity, and necessity. Innocent recreation, such as the society of our friends, is encouraged by the example of our Lord. Every work which is a heavenly work, every work which is done in the service of the kingdom of God, belongs especially to the day of rest and is its best support.

Wisely do our laws sanction the abstaining, as far as possible, from labour, leaving it otherwise to each man's own conscience how he shall employ his rest. Wise shall we be if we use this priceless opportunity for

coming specially before our God, striving more zealously than is possible on any other day to remember why we were born, where we are going, why we believe in God, what is the meaning of the Father, what is the meaning of the Son, what is the meaning of the Holy Ghost, what is the purpose of redemption, what are the privileges of our Christian calling, what are our duties as shown in the example of the life of our Lord, what are our hopes after death, what are our reasons for praying, what are the grounds of our faith, what are the riches of our inheritance.

Thus we shall know for ourselves why through the resurrection of Christ the day of religious rest has gradually passed from the type to the anti-type —from the commemoration of the Jewish deliverance from a temporal bondage to the commemoration of Christian redemption from spiritual thraldom. We shall understand by our own experience why in the writings of the early Fathers it is styled a solemn and venerable day, the first and chief of days, the firstfruits of the week, better than all the festivals, new moons, or Sabbaths of the Mosaic law, higher than the highest, and to be held in admiration above all other days; the queen, the princess, or as an old translator with quaint simplicity expresses it, the lady paramount of days, clearly and pre-eminently the first; the day which the Lord hath made, that we may rejoice and be glad in it, and which, to use the strong words of St. Augustine, "if we are Christians we shall observe," so "that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Above all, let it have its full and proper meaning as

the consecration of the rest of the week. Just as the Christian ministry are chosen out not for special holiness, but because all the Lord's people are holy, all are kings and priests to God, and some must minister to them in holy things; so the first day of the week is adopted, not because all the days of our lives are not dedicated to God, but because by hallowing one more we may hallow the others better and more perfectly. If you, indeed, wish to be in the spirit in the Lord's day, you will not treat it as something singular, a passing episode after which you relapse into your ordinary life. It will be to you a day which is to communicate its temper and sunshine to all the other days of the week. It will be to you those brightest hours, towards which all your other hours are to approach as nearly as may be. It will be to you not a duty, but a privilege, not a law, but a desire; not a task but a refreshment and relaxation. You will make for yourself whatever rules about it you find—after calm and sober judgment and thought—to be best. But for anybody else you will make no restrictions except for those of your own households for whom you are responsible. Judging yourself, you will not commit that odious crime against Christianity of judging others.

CHRIST AND HOME.

"Go home to thy friends."
St. Mark v. 19.

Preached in Chester Cathedral, 1890.

CHRIST AND HOME.

THE consecration of the life of home is one of the most blessed results of the kingdom of our risen and living Lord on earth. It is the remembrance and the thought of the beautiful home at Nazareth, where for thirty years dwelt quietly and unobtrusively the Son of God, which, through every generation and in every part of Christendom where the faith of Christ has been really understood, have preserved for us this happy ideal. The civilised nations of the ancient world, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, had words in their languages for houses, but they had no word for home. The Hebrews had a better understanding of it; but think what distractions, utterly incongruous with the idea of home there were even in the family of King David, the man after God's own heart—the many wives, the jealousy between the different sets of children, the crimes, rebellions, and unhappiness!

The law of Moses never sought to prohibit polygamy, but only to mitigate its attendant evils. The Talmudists considered eighteen wives the maximum for a king, and four for a private individual. Psalmist and moralist held up pictures of domestic bliss. in which the one true wife is the leading figure; but it was only

the inconveniences and discomforts of polygamy in small houses and with scanty incomes which prevented its general adoption. The feeling for monogamy increased with the sterner principles which prevailed after the return from the Babylonian captivity; but in the time of our Lord polygamy was still legal. Herod the Great had no less than nine wives at one time; the Talmudists frequently assume polygamy as a well-known fact; and the early Christian writers, in their commentaries on St. Paul's advice to Timothy that the bishop should be the husband of one wife, explain it of polygamy in terms which leave no doubt as to the fact of its prevalence in the apostolic age. Polygamy, in fact, prevailed amongst the Jews until about the year 400 after our Lord, when it was extinguished amongst them by an imperial edict of the Emperors Honorius and Arcadius.

We do not find a high domestic ideal amongst the most civilised of the pagan nations. Plato, the purest, best, and greatest of Greek philosophers, wanted even to abolish family life altogether. Marriages, according to his proposal, were only to be at certain seasons of the year, were only to last a few days, and were to take place in a great department of the State. Husbands and wives were afterwards to be strangers to each other, and children were never to know who were their parents, or their brothers, or their sisters. Of course, such a perverted system has never been attempted; from the beginning there has always been some sort of family life; but seldom if ever has it reached that pure idea of all that we have come to mean by home, until the example of it came in the untroubled happiness of the carpenter's cottage at Nazareth, to be reproduced where-

soever afterwards the spiritual presence of the Lord has shone over the joys and sorrows of domestic intercourse.

What is home? Very few of us in a highly civilised country, where all is activity and movement, can hope to have the privilege of staying on from one generation to another in the old seat or homestead of the family. It is melancholy where sentimental legislation tries to fix this calamitous principle on a warm-hearted, poetical, and enthusiastic population, such as that of the Highlands and islands of Scotland. But even under the most theoretical and least practical of governments the thing is impossible. There would be no room for us. We should all be paupers. The birds must leave their nests when they are able to take care of themselves, and provide in due time nests of their own. To live from generation to generation in the same place is not what we mean by home. Where landed property is inherited, one of the family must become possessor of the family hearth, and the others do not grudge that great honour and responsibility. But home is something much simpler.

"The man of high descent," says Dickens, "may love the halls and lands of his inheritance as a part of himself, as trophies of his birth and power; the poor man's attachment to the tenement he holds, which strangers have held before, which strangers to-morrow may occupy again, has a worthier root, struck deep into a purer soil; his household gods are of flesh and blood, with no alloy of gold or silver or precious stones; he has no property, but in the affections of his own heart, and when these affections endear to him bare floors and walls, despite of toil and

scanty meals, that man has his love of home from God, and his rude hut or chamber becomes a solemn place." That is the truest and simplest idea of home—the chimney-corner, the sleeping-place, the living-place, where our dear ones, or we ourselves, even if we have the great misfortune to be solitary, happen to be dwelling. They may be compelled to change their resting-place from year to year—still, where they are, there is home.

I am speaking to young men in the town, and we cannot doubt that there is a tendency, in the multitudinous complexities of our contemporary life, to run counter to the full and proper ideal of home. Living in flats, tenements, apartments, lodgings, is not the same thing as having a roof-tree of your own, however small, and those who live by hundreds together in vast warehouses can have little opportunity of realising the happiness of family enjoyment.

And it is one of the signs which make us tremble for the stability of our present civilisation that amongst those who have the great misfortune to be very fashionable as well as very rich there is to some extent an inclination to despise the simple pleasures and duties of domestic life, to ridicule its happiness, to overset its principles, to act on the selfish determination to gratify personal inclinations at all hazards, to make very light of the marriage tie, and to undermine in every way the ancient, time-honoured, vital, and Christian sanctions of home. Further, at the opposite end of the scale, amongst the two hundred thousand of my fellow-citizens in the East End of London (for example), who, by our wicked and hateful system of over-crowding, are forced to live in single rooms, and among the corresponding class in other parts of London

and our great towns, it is clear that as soon as the children begin to appear, the life of home becomes almost impossible, and the man naturally drifts off to spend the rest of his life, other than his hours for working and sleeping, in the public-house. And the children take to the freedom and licence, the coarseness and looseness, the awful lessons, and the awful language of the streets.

But in spite of all these difficulties, where true principles and ideals are given to us, they will under all circumstances be applicable to our needs, with fitting modifications and proportional varieties; and all, I think, at any rate, who in the midst of this fallen and desolate world are true members of the kingdom of Christ, must hope some day to have a shelter of their own from the storms and troubles of the world, where none may intrude, and where the heart can rear its most sacred shrine.

Modern writers have certainly not been slow to appreciate this, one of the most blessed of all the gifts which our Lord received for men when He ascended up on high.

Let me give you one or two glimpses which great writers have described for us of that dearest spot to each on earth. "Home! it is the residence not merely of the body, but of the heart; it is a place for the affections to unfold and develop themselves; for children to love and learn and play in; for husband and wife to toil smilingly together, and make life a blessing. The object of all ambition should be to be happy at home; if we are not happy there we cannot be happy elsewhere. It is the best proof of the virtues of a family circle to see a happy fireside."

"Home!" wrote Channing, "our family duties come before, and, in our present existence, are worth more than all our other social ties; they give the first throb to the heart, and unseal the deep fountains of its love. Home is the chief school of human virtue; its responsibilities, joys, sorrows, smiles, tears, hopes, and solicitudes form the chief interest of human life."

"Home!" wrote Uhland, "how deep a spell that little word contains! It is the circle in which all our purest and best feelings move and concentrate themselves; the hive in which, like the industrious bee, youth garners the sweets and memories of life for age to meditate and feed upon! It is childhood's temple and manhood's shrine—the ark of the past and the future."

"Home! it appears to us the most beautiful when we are away from it. Chilled by the indifference of the rest of the world, we long to be with her, the dear wife or the fond mother who prizes us at above our proper value; annoyed by the discomforts which attend us amongst strangers, we yearn to be in the loved place where they are unknown, and in the midst of the affections which sanctify it."

And what are the principles on which such a state of being are founded?

First, there must be the blessing of the presence of God. "If a man love Me, he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode with him." However few you may be, you must meet day by day at morning and at evening to hold common intercourse with your Father in Heaven. A house without family prayers is not a Christian home. More true religious feeling,

more deep sense of duty is created by the daily united worship of Him in whom all the families of the earth are blessed than by any other means whatsoever. Best is it when this can be both morning and evening. At morning you come together to ask His sanction for the plans and occupations of the day, to praise Him for the mercies of renewed life, to bring before Him the names and needs of your nearest and dearest. At night after the cares and labours of the past busy hours, your soul is tranquillised by meeting in common to ask for pardon, peace, and blessing. Do not neglect this high privilege, do not slight this key-stone of a righteous life because you have little time, or because you are very few. Remember that where two or three are gathered together in the Lord's name, there is He in the midst of them. Believe that the holy thoughts and dutiful resolves after godly and sober ways, and the impressive recognition of the great truths of life which the words of the wisest and best of men bring into your mind in the books of family prayers provided for your households, have a deep hold on the heart in its purest and best and simplest moods, and are a help beyond all value in the daily struggle with self-will and sinfulness, and in the daily striving for that which is good, just, and true. They are a daily witness for God, which find echoes in our inmost souls.

In such a home there must be *love*. If you have any sense at all of what is best and most delightful, you will never allow the hallowed peace of its atmosphere to be clouded or broken by storms of jealousy or sullenness, or the lurid flashes of malice and anger. Such passions there may be outside, but here is ever that

calm and clear tranquillity where each wishes the good and happiness of the other, where tenderness and gentleness are never out of place or misunderstood, and where memory never fails to remind us that, as our treasures may be taken from our hands, we cannot make too much of them while they are still within our reach. Dark, indeed, and lasting will be the shadow on that home where, when some chair is at last empty, some beloved presence at length withdrawn, the bitter recollection broods of cruel quarrels and hard self-will, and the agonizing rain of needless tears. "In a happy home," wrote Jonathan Edwards, "there will be no fault-finding, overbearing spirit; there will be no peevishness or fretfulness; unkindness will not dwell in the heart or be found in the tongue. Oh, the tears, the sighs, the wasting of life, and health, and strength, and time, of all that is most to be desired in our private life, occasioned merely by unkind words!"

"Is there any blessing of Heaven which is more beautiful," says another of our teachers, the famous Swedish writer, Frederika Bremer, "more worthy of our warmest gratitude than the possession of a home where goodness, kindness, and joy are daily inmates; where the heart and eye may sun themselves in a world of love; where the mind is clear and elevated; where friends, not merely by words, but by actions, say to each other, 'Thy gladness, thy sorrow, thy hope, thy prayer, are also mine'?"

"Home!" writes our English moralist, Frederick Robertson, "it is the one place in all the world where hearts are sure of each other; it is the place of confidence; it is the place where we tear off that mask of guarded and suspicious coldness which the world forces

us to wear in self-defence; and where we pour out the unreserved communications of full and confiding hearts; it is the spot where expressions of tenderness gush out without any sensations of awkwardness, and without any dread of ridicule." For the dear circle of his own choice and creation, the husband or father when he returns from the labours and employments of the day will keep his tenderest endearments, his most playful phrases, his most cheerful humour, his most interesting experiences, his most valuable collections of information. It is there that he will desire most to shine, most gracefully to amuse, most usefully to enlighten, most sympathetically to soothe, encourage, and elevate. "To be happy at home," said Dr. Johnson, "is the ultimate result of all ambition, the end to which all enterprise and labour tends, and of which every desire prompts the prosecution. It is, indeed, at home that every man must be known by those who would make a just estimate either of his virtue or felicity, for smiles and embroidery are alike occasional, and the mind is often dressed for show in painted honour and fictitious benevolence."

And while love is there, there will also be *order*. Each will know his own place, and abide by his own function. Nearer to the true ideal was the sweet, picturesque impressive old way of our forefathers, when children knelt morning and evening to receive the blessing of their parents, when they remained standing in their presence until bidden to sit, when they did not speak until they were addressed, than the unwise, unbecoming, insolent familiarity of so many children in these days with their elders, which can only result in loss of esteem, respect, and due influence

and authority. And in other ways the spirit of order will show itself. If proper use is to be made of the day, time will not be allowed to pass by slipshod and at haphazard, but its hours will be prudently mapped out for different occupations and employments. There will be the time for rising and retiring, which will be punctually obeyed; the time for morning and evening prayer, the time for united study of the word of God, the time for the separate pursuit of the principal duties of the day, the time for meals, the time for exercise, the time for mutual conversation, refreshment and recreation. No life can proceed usefully and profitably unless it be arranged on lines well and carefully laid down, and conscientiously followed. The tedious life will be the life without plan, method or purpose.

One of the most delightful parts of the life of home will be the common study of that which purifies the imagination, ennobles the affections, disciplines the will, and quickens the conscience. They who have the privilege of belonging to such a home as I am describing will always have some leavening book in hand to bring new thoughts into the little circle, to give food for healthy conversation, and to be a channel for the brisk interchange of ideas. Sometimes it will be that which is well-established and of classical reputation; sometimes that which is new, the reflex and product of current opinion and genius; sometimes it will be poetry, sometimes romance, sometimes history, sometimes biography, sometimes popular science. Whatever may be the tastes of the members of the little society, variety will be a continual principle in choice. Infinitely abundant are the treasures of the vast literatures of the world, and they are ever accumulating.

It will be for the good and happiness of all that light should daily come in from the glorious firmament of genius and intelligence without, and that kindred minds should pace together in the rich pastures of wisdom and knowledge and fancy. Uninstructed intercourse would easily degenerate into foolishness; unenlightened conversation would soon become monotonous, jejune, and wearisome; the wit and wisdom of God's wisest and most gifted sons will be an invaluable corrective.

If home is to be attractive to those who work with their hands, and whose lot in life is laborious, it need not be outwardly beautiful, but it must be neat, clean, and orderly. There must be nothing repulsive in its sights or scents. Things beautiful are not within the reach of every one; for it is not everyone who has taste or skill to select, or resources to acquire what is truly ornamental, restful, and satisfying to the eye. But to be clean, neat, and orderly is within the power of all. The poorest garret can be fresh and sweet, and rich with a sense of welcome and repose. And the citizen of the kingdom of Christ will rejoice to have about him little reminders of human love and affection, faces of friends to whom we owe much kindness and sympathy, places endeared to us by wealth of association and happy experiences, symbols of what has been best and fairest in our lives. Thus the very humblest home can become the sanctuary of our purest affections, our most lasting experiences, our highest and most heavenly aspirations. "A well-regulated home is a millennium on a small scale." "To Adam," said Julius Hare, "Paradise was home; and among the

good of his descendants home is Paradise." "There is a magic," said one than whom none ever more thoroughly understood and enjoyed home life, the poet Southey, "even in the little word itself; it is a mystic circle which surrounds comforts and virtues never known beyond its hallowed limits."

One caution more. As there is a merry and fascinating freemasonry of home, where little shades of humour imperceptible to others are recognised and cherished, so there is one condition on which alone this can exist, and that is the law of sacredness. Our wills are wayward, our affections errant, our discretion liable to foolishness. We all of us individually have friends and acquaintances unknown or less familiarly known to other members of our family. But if once the associates of the inmost circle discover that there has been treason; if once they find that things have been repeated, that confidences are not safe, that the outside world has been informed of words, thoughts, or experiences uttered within the privileged precincts and common interests of home; then that freemasonry is justly gone for ever, and the members of that circle must be on their guard each against the other as if they were strangers, critics, and enemies. A true home is the nursery of all national virtues; but to be true, the home must be to all its members sacred and inviolable.

Such is the gift which our Lord has given us; the pure, loving, unselfish, cheerful, hopeful Christian home. And it is because you have yourselves received this priceless blessing from Him and from your Christian parents, that I ask you to see that your homes contain that element which alone can make them

happy, the presence of Christ Himself. "When hearts are filled with holy affection," said the great English preacher South, "and home is happy, then do the young dwell in a charmed circle, which only the naturally depraved would seek to quit, and across which boundary temptations to error shine but feebly."

Well can you remember the home of your childhood, and all that you owe to it. Of all memories that is the strongest and the most pathetic. If you did not believe firmly and fully in the future home in the land of light, the remembrance of those early fields of delight would be almost intolerable. You remember how those homes were full of bright living voices and sweet loving faces. You can see even now, across the long years, the dear father and mother laying themselves out for the happiness of their children, and entering into all your little schemes with unaffected interest; the member of the elder generation coming for his yearly visit, and delighting the younger folk with fascinating remembrances of the past. The magic word of our subject to-day calls you once more to look at its long gallery of pictures, so exquisitely beautiful. Where are the voices now? Heard no more. Where is the circle of sweet bright faces? Vanished for ever; one by one they have passed into the unseen world, and we see and hear them no more. The kindly smile of the father, the dear sympathy of the gracious mother, seem to gleam once more from the spirit land. But it is far off and we are alone. On you has come the responsibility of these things. One generation provided a house for you; you have to provide it in your turn for others.

What others did for you, you have to do for the coming race.

Oh, let your home be like the home of Nazareth, where Christ lives in all the fulness and power of His presence and revelation! "Those of you who are best acquainted with the world, or who have read most extensively the history of men, will allow the truth of the saying that in the formation of character the most telling influence is the early home. It is that home which often in boyhood has formed beforehand our most famous scholars, our most celebrated heroes, our most devoted missionaries; and even when men have grown up reckless and reprobate, and have broken all restraints, human and divine, the last anchor which has dragged, the last cable which they have been able to snap, is the memory which moored them to a virtuous home." And the character of your homes influences more than your children and friends; on it depends the moral health of the whole people. "The home," said Samuel Smiles, "is the crystal of society, the nucleus of national character; and from that source, be it pure or tainted, issue the habits, principles, and maxims which govern public as well as private life. The nation comes from the nursery; public opinion itself is for the most part the outgrowth of the home, and the best philanthropy comes from the fireside."

By the memory, then, of these past influences, which have been to you so true and pure, and to be severed from which has been so heartrending, ask God, as a special gift of His mercy, to bless your homes, and to make them once more what Christ has made them in the past! Let nothing be heard in them of which He

would disapprove! Study His life, and reproduce it by His help amongst yourselves! It is no great task which you have to undertake; "the road to home happiness lies over small stepping-stones." "Home should be a place of repose, of cheerfulness, of comfort, where the soul can renew strength to encounter the labours and troubles of life." All this the presence of the Lord can ensure, and His presence only. And when you have lived in Christlike homes on earth, wherever or whatever they may be, may God of His infinite lovingkindness grant you a place among those eternal homes which can never pass away, and where all will be once more united!

CHRIST AND RICHES.

"Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness."
St. Luke xvi. 9.

Preached at St. Paul's Cathedral, 1891.

CHRIST AND RICHES.

THERE can be no doubt that our blessed Lord greatly preferred the poor, as a class, to the rich. In looking round to see what kind of persons would be likely to satisfy those conditions of simplicity, singleness of heart and purpose, earnestness, directness of faith, sincerity and unreservedness of love, which He required for the new society or kingdom which He was founding on the earth, He observed that these qualities were far more spontaneous and unfettered amongst those who had little means for the cultivation of the unspiritual pleasures of this life than amongst those who had every conceivable temptation to habitual self-indulgence. The words of our Lord are not much in fashion in our time, and they are constantly explained away. But this quiet, firm, unworldly attitude of His mind cannot be seriously denied. It was not very often that the subject of riches was brought before Him, for He chose to be born a poor man, and to move from first to last amongst the very humblest and meanest of the people. But wherever the facts of wealth occurred to Him, His position with regard to them was one and unvarying. Some of these sayings sound to us, at first hearing, as exceedingly harsh, until we discover the profound pity, the divine

truth which underlay them. "Woe unto you that are rich!" He said, without any qualification, "for ye have received your consolation." One of His most uncompromising parables is about the wealthy fool, and He wound it up by saying, "so is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." In that parable, by which He so memorably described the different kinds of hearers of His heavenly message, He seemed to think it perfectly natural, probable, and common that, in the case of those who were exposed to the trial of property, "the deceitfulness of riches would choke the word, and they would become unfruitful." One of the most important counsels of His most important, characteristic, and typical Sermon on the Mount was, that any who wished to be His disciples must "not lay up for themselves treasures upon earth, because where their treasure was there would their heart be also." In the same sense He told them, on another occasion, with His gracious, unquestionable, unhesitating authority, that it was not for them "to labour in any way for the meat which perisheth"; and again, that they were to "take no trouble about the future, what they were to eat or drink or to wear." Such things were objects of interest to those who remained outside the kingdom. If they continued to occupy their minds with these matters, where would be the difference between themselves and the unregenerate world? Perhaps the most startling, and, to the ordinary citizen of the world, the most repulsive statement of His feeling of candid recognition of the extreme dangers of wealth was that most courageous and penetrating injunction to the rich young man, which lost Him what would have seemed

likely to be a useful and fruitful follower, that "if he would be perfect he must go and sell all that he had and give to the poor, and he should have treasure in Heaven." And when the young man had rejected His counsel of perfection, and had gone away sorrowful, our Lord, in the most solemn manner, gave utterance to a general truth, introduced by His most emphatic formula of asseveration, and of which He evidently felt the tremendous gravity: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that a rich man shall with difficulty enter into the kingdom of Heaven. And again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." And when His disciples, hearing this most wholesome and vital lesson, so marked an advance, for example, on the rather worldly and comfortable teaching of the Book of Proverbs, were exceedingly amazed, saying, "Who, then, can be saved?" He thought it necessary to emphasize yet further the difficulty which He saw, by saying that only by God's special interference could the rich be weaned from their absorbing affection for things below: "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."

And I do not think that much comfort will be found by those who fancy that it was necessary for our Lord to be stern in order to suit the special circumstances of a unique crisis, but that the Apostles after Him would accommodate themselves more genially to general society. St. Paul follows exactly the same line: "They that will be rich fall into a temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the

love of money is the root of all evil: which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." St. James has a very vigorous cut at the worldly spirit which is so powerful an enemy of our spiritual life at this very hour, in his description of the two men going to church, one with a gold ring and goodly apparel, the other a poor man in vile raiment, and the very different reception which they got. And then he makes a touching appeal to his readers: "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?" But his remarks about the rich are by no means encouraging. In another place he addresses such of them as were selfish and self-indulgent in language of the boldest vigour: "Go to, now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries which shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days." St. John, the apostle of love, cuts the ground away from the feet of those who spend their incomes on themselves, with no less clearness and severity: "Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

Our Lord and His Apostles did not take this depreciatory view of the value of money to the individual on account of the poor, that they might have the benefit of superfluities, but for the sake of the rich themselves,

for their character, their spirituality, their chance of becoming members of the kingdom, their hopes of Heaven. Everybody is rich, from the Christian point of view, who has more than is necessary for the simplest style of plain and wholesome living, and for the maintenance and education of his family. Our Lord knows nothing about stations in life, differences in rank and position, and corresponding obligations to live up to supposed standards of magnificence. He saw how extraordinarily strong the temptations of the rich would be to unspirituality of life. Their whole habits, their whole mutual intercourse with each other, their little worldly ambitions and rivalries, their love of the colour and comfort of a luxurious life, their matrimonial campaigns, the wonderful breadth of their resources for amusement, the skill and zeal with which great classes of the industrious would make it the business of their lives to cater for their entertainment and angle for their money, the universal tone which there would be amongst them of seeking for little but constant hourly amusement and a succession of pleasurable excitements, the almost universal lapse there would be in their society from the standard of unworldliness and simplicity, plain living, and active benevolence which was necessary to the kingdom of Christ; all this would have a terrible power in making them set their affections on things below and not on things above, in making them selfish, and, therefore, as selfishness is the origin and meaning of all sin, in making them sinful.

We all know how it is with so many a young man brought up in great abundance. He has never been taught to deny himself anything for which he has

wished. From his cradle he has, metaphorically speaking, been like the rich man in the parable—the reason of whose going to hell most of us find it so very hard in these days to understand that we almost fancy there must have been something left out—clothed in purple and fine linen and faring sumptuously every day. He has been sent to one of our great homes of religious and useful learning, and there he has met with seven or eight hundred young soldiers of Christ, who have been brought up in just the same unhappy unspiritual surroundings as himself. By universal custom, example, and precept he learns that life is one long organized system of amusement. First surround yourself with comfort, then spend all your energies in amusement; that is the great moral he takes away with him from school. The amusement may be wholesome, healthy, manly, and may from a pagan point of view produce admirable results; but pursued as a system, as an occupation for every day, it is utterly disastrous to the spiritual life of the Christian. This was the kind of danger which our Lord foresaw. A perpetual series of hunting, shooting, fishing, travelling, dancing, feasting, drinking, and playing, and the devotion of the whole income to these absorbing pursuits, would mean voluntary expatriation from His kingdom. And then our young man becomes absorbed in the world of London. "A great estate left to an heir," says Bacon, "is as a lure to all the birds of prey round about to seize on him, if he be not the better established in years and judgment." But it is not necessary to have a great estate for this purpose. A few superfluous hundreds or thousands are enough. We all know how skilful, voracious, and remorseless are the birds of prey.

And he finds London life just the same as that to which he has been always accustomed; almost the whole of the powers and resources of his associates devoted to ceaseless entertainments and amusements. If he marries he is taught to marry for money or influence, and the chances are that his wife will be as worldly as himself. So his children will begin again as he himself began. They will be taught mechanically to repeat their catechism, and to renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh. But these will in time become their second nature. I think we cannot help admitting that the temptations and difficulties of the rich are beyond comparison greater than the difficulties and temptations of the poor.

And we need not wonder that after all these years of the preaching of the kingdom of God these dangers to our life in Christ should be so great, when we leave the safe shelter of this sacred building, and go out amongst our friends and acquaintances in the world. A great heresy on this subject has spread over the Church. It is a heresy from the old Judaizing days, when people thought that they ought to live as closely by the Old Testament as by the New. Uncomfortable at the doctrine of the kingdom of Christ that we must devote all that we are and have to the service of God and of man, these people fortunately hit upon the happy discovery that the Jews paid a tenth of their produce for the support of the Priests, the Levites, and the Temple. This was, in fact, merely an arrangement for the support of the national worship, and did not include anything which the Jews gave to the fatherless, the widow, and the stranger. It had nothing to do with what we

call almsgiving or charity. But having made their discovery, these Judaizing perverters of the kingdom of Christ taught that if you give a tenth of your annual income to what they are pleased to call charity, and devote all the other nine-tenths to the world, you are not only doing all that God can possibly expect of you, but are actually performing a sublime, heroic, and most Christian action. God must be content with one-tenth, the world may and must have all the rest.

That is not the doctrine of the kingdom of Christ! Nothing, indeed, could be farther from it. "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Give alms, said our Lord, not of a tenth, but "of such things as ye have." "Seek ye the kingdom of God," He said, "and what you need will be added to you. After all these things do the nations of the world seek, and your Father knows that ye have need of these things. Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the true kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth; for where your treasure is there will your heart be also." "He that taketh not his cross," he that is not dead, that is, to the things of the world, "and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it." That is the serious, true, earnest spirit of the kingdom of God. No dallying with a miserable tenth, but the sacrifice of the whole being, body, soul, and spirit, to the service of God. "Charge them that are rich in this world," wrote St. Paul, "that

they be not high-minded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to share their goods with others, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." And, again, remember the well-known words which you learnt long ago, but which so many of us neglect: "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And be not fashioned according to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Henceforth we will abolish from among ourselves that fatal and deadly heresy of the tenth.

But our Lord Jesus Christ in His infinite pity and His divine wisdom, badly as He thought of the natural condition of the rich, would not leave them without hope. He strongly preferred the poor, and urgently advised all rich people to divest themselves of those unspiritual cares which would in most cases make their reward a very small one in the kingdom of Heaven. But He saw that all would not do this, and He was willing to leave them in the possession of their wealth on one condition. They were to "make to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." Mammon means wealth; they were to use their wealth as trustees of God, and as stewards for the poor. If they must keep such dangerous and poisonous materials in their own hands, that was the only means they would have at once of escaping from the snares and slavery of the

world, and of proving their devotion to their God. That is the gospel for the rich, and that is their difficulty—to have in their hands all the means of luxury and self-indulgence, of amusement and pleasure, and yet not to use them for themselves; to be surrounded by pagan friends and acquaintances who are devoting all their energies to the refinement of civilisation, and yet to be themselves wholly given to the doing of good. That is the salvation of the rich, and that is God's divine remedy for the sufferings and inequalities which men have brought upon themselves by their recklessness, their follies, their sins, and the futility of their arrangements. Our blessed Lord never gave the slightest encouragement to Socialism. The wealth of the rich was not to be taken away from them for the good of the rest. They were to have the responsibility of keeping it in their own hands. All was to be purely voluntary.

There is a canting spirit going about in these days which pretends that no good can be done by money, but that everything must be achieved by personal effort. This foolish boast is merely the combined result of conceit on the part of those who have not the money to give, and of hypocrisy on the part of those who have the money but do not like to give it. "If there were none of these maligned, hateful, rich people," wrote a sensible American lady, "who would build hospitals, and provide asylums for orphans, and for the deaf and dumb and the blind?" It would be the impertinence of levity to deny that the million of George Peabody has been an incalculable blessing to the artisans of London. It would be mere scepticism to say that the half million of Mr. Baird has not proved

a happy godsend to the National Church of Scotland in carrying the message of the kingdom of Christ to the dark alleys and godless suburbs of her manufacturing towns; or that all the great foundations and churches of modern London, some of them (as in the case of my own parish *) the result of the immense and magnificent liberality of single benefactors, have been useless and ineffectual; or that the thirty millions raised by the National Society for the Christian education of the poor have been without benefit to the nation; or that the six modern bishoprics of recent times in England have been useless; or that the seventy or eighty Colonial, Indian. and missionary sees, which have been founded by the Christian people of England, have not been spreading light and hope and life in distant lands; or that the hospitals and dispensaries of Christian London have done nothing to alleviate the sufferings of the struggling millions. Even the daily button-hole flowers of fifty young men would make many widows rich beyond their most hopeful dreams. Is there no satisfaction to two well-known families that out of their single-handed munificence the two ancient Cathedrals of Dublin, St. Patrick and Christ Church, have been raised from a condition of squalor and neglect to a state of consummate and exemplary beauty? Do you suppose that there is no reward of conscience for him who devotes a quarter of a million sterling to the improvement of the dwellings of the humblest of the poor; or who consecrates a beautiful park for the refreshment of the inhabitants of the dull and dreary districts of North London; or who rears a noble home for the inspiring reminiscences of the heroes of British history, the

* St. Stephen's, Westminster.

greatest and best of Britain's sons? Those who would take from the rich their hope and consolation of doing good are about as wise as those other perverse and pedantic wiseacres who think that all evils can be cured by a judicious and extended administration of the Poor-law, and who if they had their own way would soon make all Christian virtue to consist in a patient submission to the many burdens of a constantly increasing taxation.

You, dear Christian people, are not of the same mind as the perverse theorists who deny the power of Christian wealth and benevolence. You know the joy of those who have abundance for the carrying on of the government of God in the world, and you daily thank Him for having put it into your hearts to make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. Not in vain has the almost vindictive song of triumph of the blessed Virgin sounded as a warning in your ears day after day and week after week. "The rich He hath sent empty away." You rejoice that it is in your power to make innumerable families of the unsuccessful happy and prosperous by emigration; to increase the usefulness of the hospitals, which are struggling even for existence, by additional endowment; to erect public baths in many a dingy, dreary, cheerless area; to supply every district amongst the working classes with clubs and gymnasia for young men; to eliminate for the future that helpless and innumerable class of general labourers by supplying secondary education, polytechnics, people's palaces, in every district of London; to breathe health and life into the stunted myriads of our street children by liberal support to the country holidays fund; by providing ample and inalienable playing-fields for each of the vast districts now sepa-

rated by almost insuperable miles of houses from white clouds, green fields, and daisies; by granting pensions to thousands of aged derelicts, men and women, now rotting in cellars and garrets, saintly in their patience and resignation, and bringing them by your sympathetic charity to the very gates of Heaven; by supplying every separate municipal division of London with its own almshouses; by showing your patriotism, local and general, in the erection of libraries and picture-galleries which might in time actually rival those of provincial towns; by inspiring hope into every society for home missions; by adequately supporting the great foreign missionary societies in their glorious and most successful tasks of preaching the gospel to every creature.

The latest of our social and religious reformers,* if the Christian people of this country have confidence in his judgment, should not find the slightest difficulty in obtaining the million for which he asks. It is for these very experiments that great fortunes and sums of money have been permitted by Divine Providence to accumulate in these times in so many hands. It is the height of absurdity to suppose that the National Church would have any jealousy whatever of any success in the proposed direction, however great. Clergy and laity alike would rejoice to see their unhappy brothers and sisters, now degraded to the lowest depths by drink, at length clothed and in their right minds. Their condition is the greatest scandal which the earth has ever seen; but it is a scandal which reflects on our system of government, not on our religious institutions. It is the very problem at which the National Church, clergy and laity alike, have

* General Booth.

for half-a-century been working, since the population of our country began to multiply so enormously.

We have doubted whether remedies on so vast a scale as are now suggested would not be likely to defeat their own object by publicity and the impossibility of dealing with so huge an aggregate of cases individually; but if others can do it, in God's name let them try. It was on this very subject that I first addressed the clergy of East London from my official seat; I explained why there was no one remedy; I spoke of the duty of decentralising the local government of the cities which make up London; of overcrowding, which lies very much at the root of our troubles, and its remedies; of foreign pauper immigration; of the possibility of State training for the unfit; of warnings to rural districts against the expectation of always finding work in the towns; I spoke of emigration and of colonisation; of the laws we needed for the prevention of intemperance; of local councils for improving the condition of the poor. The plan for organizing farms for the discipline of those who have fallen out of the race of labour in large towns was all worked out some winters ago at the Mansion House, under the presidency of an enlightened Lord Mayor. There are numerous societies for colonisation and emigration. Carts for collecting the abundant remains of the rich man's table were organized by my friends in the West of London. The suggested plans are all familiar. They have, indeed, been crippled for want of funds. If the popularity and public position of our latest reformer can command the superfluities of the wealthy to carry out his schemes, much good may be accomplished at which all will cordially rejoice. The idea of the combi-

nation of religious emotion with strict personal discipline is full of hope. Even if the reformer should be unable to change the lot of the whole three millions whom he estimates; even if in so prodigious and complex a civilisation as ours there must always be a residuum of incapables; still the effort is worth making and cannot fail to accomplish fortunate results. There is room for every kind of effort and experiment. It is quite clear that something will be attempted. May the abundant blessing of Him who has promised that the poor shall not always be forsaken, rest on so much zeal, courage, and enthusiasm! May His Holy Spirit bestow that prudence and caution without which enthusiasm will end in disaster!

Such are the true joys of the rich; and they teach us how great a happiness our Lord was opening to us when He spoke to us of the friendship of Mammon. There are those amongst us who have believed our Lord and taken Him at His word. Great will be their reward in Heaven. Is there not something very pathetic in remembering that our Lord has put into our hands the cure for every human ill, personal and social, and yet for generations, age after age, His words have been neglected and perverted, and even now, perhaps, are less practised than they were in the first age of the Church? Would it not be worth our while to persuade others outside to adopt His golden rules as we do ourselves? It would indeed be a great secret of happiness to them if they could discover it: "He that soweth little shall reap little, and he that soweth plenteously shall reap plenteously." There is more depth of truth in that than the familiarity of the words would allow us to suppose. "To do good and to distri-

bute forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Generosity, liberality, self-sacrifice, self-devotion, unworldliness, simplicity, plain living, the daily and persistent doing of good, these will be to us like angels, and their wings will be filled with the Spirit of Christ Himself, and His grace will strengthen them, and they will bear us up, and Christ will accept our work and labour of love as done for Him, and so we shall at length be received into everlasting habitations!

CHRIST AND THE NATIONAL SIN OF INTEMPERANCE.

"Where is Abel thy brother?"
Genesis iv. 9.

Preached in Norwich Cathedral, Tuesday, October 11th, 1892.

CHRIST AND THE NATIONAL SIN OF INTEMPERANCE.

THE great fact of responsibility is one which we are sometimes rather slow to acknowledge. We are apt unconsciously to argue that if we look after ourselves and our families fairly well, it is the business of other people to do exactly the same, and that if all would only carry out this duty with as much care and success as ourselves, then the world would be a sufficiently prosperous and happy place. But that is a view of our obligation to the human family which is altogether partial, selfish, blind, unworthy, and irreligious. That is not God's plan for the government of the world. Even in the old days, when Israel was still a child, and had not arrived at that larger and nobler conception of neighbourly and brotherly sympathy which the Lord Jesus Christ was to unfold, God taught His people, by precept and by institutions, that they were answerable not only for themselves, their wives, their sons, their daughters, but for their servants, their cattle, the stranger within their gates—in short, for the whole people. A public scandal and disgrace rested not merely on the perpetrator of it, but on all the congregation, and must be purged away by public expia-

tion and repentance. Never probably was a system of law established in any country so thoroughly calculated to cultivate an intense patriotism and to spread a feeling of healthy solidarity in the whole race as the legislation of Moses. And when our Lord came He taught us in manifold ways, with an emphasis and a distinctness which no servant of His can dispute, that we are indeed to love our neighbour as ourselves, and to make his sorrows, his weaknesses, and his sins our own unremitting care. As He Himself came to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to comfort all that mourn, to appoint unto them that sorrow to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for grieving, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; as He came Himself to bear our sins and carry our infirmities; so it is the same spirit of yearning tenderness for the follies and mistakes of our fallen brothers and sisters that is to be the special mark of the followers of the Saviour of the world. It is by bearing each other's burdens that we are to fulfil the law of Christ. It is by the measure in which we acknowledge our responsibility to those who have stumbled and maimed themselves in the race of life, in giving meat to the hungry and drink to the thirsty, in taking the forlorn to our homes, in clothing the naked, in coming to those who are in prison with hope and invigoration, that the sincerity of our own faith will be tested in the last great day.

The evil which we are on this occasion met to consider is without exaggeration the greatest from which our people are at present suffering. I do not mean to say that there are not other shameful disgraces to

which the warm-hearted Christian patriot must turn his attention. Party spirit, gambling, dishonesty in trade, adulteration of manufactures, prostitution, looseness of life amongst our young people, illegitimacy, the worship of money, the worship of amusement, frivolity, greed, misrepresentation, and lying; these are all subjects about which we desire a better spirit to prevail. But at present it is the unanimous opinion of those who are least excitable, and whose words are most entitled to respect, that the form of sin which is at the bottom of all other troubles amongst us is the debasing and enslaving love of strong drink. Judge rivals judge, and statesman vies with statesman, physician with physician, philanthropist joins with bishop, and Churchman with Nonconformist in reiterated repetition of the warning against the mad frenzy of intoxication by which every class is infected. It cannot be too often dinned into our dull ears that it was one of the most powerful of our legal statesmen who declared that nine-tenths of the crime of this country can be traced, directly or indirectly, to the vice of intemperance; that it was one of the most deliberate of our judges who solemnly set before the country that of a calendar of sixty-three prisoners at a northern assize more than half of the offences of violence, not indirectly but directly, were attributed to excessive drinking. It was a Lord Chief Justice, the most responsible legal authority in the land, who stated that, when the indirect effects are added to those that are direct, actually nineteen-twentieths of the cases that come before him are the result of drink. It was the most experienced and wisest of our philanthropists who told us with melancholy earnestness that but for the

labours of Christian men and women to check the torrent, we should by this time have been plunged in such a flood of drunkenness, immorality, and crime as would have made the whole country uninhabitable. It was a thoughtful and cultured prince, not an enthusiast or a visionary, who described drink as the only terrible enemy England has to fear.

Oh, my brothers! you know from your own experience, both in the peaceful village and the busy streets of the town, how absolutely and appallingly true are these words. To their accuracy witness every police report that is printed in the newspapers, both of country and of city. And the misery caused is far wider than the mere individual sin. "When intemperance has taken hold of a man," wrote a shrewd observer, well known in this country fifty years ago, William Cobbett, "farewell industry, farewell emulation, farewell attention to things worthy of attention, farewell love of virtuous society, farewell decency of manners, and farewell, too, even an attention to person; everything is sunk by this predominant and brutal appetite. In how many instances do we see men who have begun life with the brightest prospects before them, and who have closed it without one ray of comfort and consolation! Young men with good fortunes, good talents, good tempers, good hearts, and sound constitutions, only by being drawn into the vortex of the drunkard, have become by degrees the most despicable and loathsome of mankind. In the house of the drunkard there is no happiness for anyone; all is uncertainty and anxiety." That is a faithful description of every case of confirmed intemperance, and every day of every week of every month of every year

has been adding innumerable evidence to its stern truthfulness ever since it was written.

In this country we are spending £142,000,000 yearly in the drinks which produce these horrors. It is reckoned by careful statisticians that every year through excessive drinking 120,000 persons are overtaken by premature death. How can they be fit for the bliss of the glorious hereafter when all through the time of their probation they have been helplessly destroying themselves? The number of habitual drunkards still living up and down our towns and villages is 600,000. Can we wonder that the national arm is paralysed, and the national heart sick, with so hideous and deadly a disease gnawing at its sinews and even at its very vitals? We have in our country 180,000 places where intoxicating drinks are sold. How many are the wholesome rivals which we have provided for these enticing scenes of temptation? In one single year no less than 361,000 persons in the United Kingdom were brought before the law for drunkenness. It was almost 1,000 for every day. Each individual case brought to so disgraceful an extremity means something like the ruin of a life, the desolation of a home. Each individual case brought into the glare of publicity means how many others, probably just as calamitous, but only not so obstreperous or so importunately obvious. In the same year 103,000 persons were confined as lunatics. Have we thought how many other constitutions destroyed, how many other brains bemuddled, how many other lives degraded, how many other sins fostered, how many other honest workers wasted though not driven to the actual degree of madness, each of these maniacs represents? On

one Saturday night in London alone the number of persons who entered two hundred public-houses between the hours of nine and twelve amounted to no less than 86,608. Of these, 30,784 were women, 719 were children. "Drink," says the greatest of our newspapers, "baffles us, confounds us, shames us, and mocks us at every point; the public-house holds on its triumphal course."

My brothers, I have mentioned to you, perhaps, the saddest feature of the whole pitiful story, that excessive drinking is even on the increase amongst women. Another great newspaper, which is justly popular for its ability and its graphic vividness, has lately, to its lasting honour, been employed in laying bare to the whole nation this abominable curse. In the United States and in Canada a woman loses caste entirely by entering a drinking tavern; in England no stigma whatever attaches to her in the loose public opinion of her equals. There is not the smallest room for doubt that the drinking of women has been enormously increased amongst us of late years. With terribly convincing clearness was this proved by the evidence given before the Committee of the House of Lords. In one town out of the whole number arrested for drunkenness there was an absolute majority of women. In Salford the number of women summoned for this shameful degradation had doubled in seven years. In Manchester in a quarter of a century the percentage had risen from 18 to 28. In Swansea it had been actually swelled to 180 per cent. in eight years. In Sheffield in two years the proportion had risen from 15 to 24 per cent. So impressed were the Lords' Committee by the force of the evidence before them that, in their report, they speak of the growth of intemperance

amongst women as on a scale so vast and at a rate of progression so rapid as to constitute a new reproach and a new danger. In Edinburgh the growth had been marked and most alarming. In Liverpool in one year there were more women committed than men. In London the number of women summoned for drunkenness had grown from 15 to 49 per cent., or nearly one half of the whole. None who know the streets of London can doubt it for a moment. And now within the last few days you have had one of the great ladies of the land, speaking with a full sense of responsibility, and with the most ample means of knowledge, in the face of the whole Church, warning the country that the evil which had once been driven out from the life of the higher class has of late returned amongst women of education, position, and refinement, and you have the insidious tippling of the boudoir, the reckless intoxication of the ball-room, the blind indulgence of the sick-chamber ; beautiful and graceful women with their tender organizations emulating the hardier and seasoned appetites of the active experts of outdoor life and exercise.

My brothers, there is not a single family in the whole kingdom, high or low, which has not some bitter record of the woes wrought by this irreconcilable enemy of our race. Are there not many who can speak of one dear to themselves, well endowed, perhaps, by nature, but weak of will ; the old sad story of extravagance at college, or in business, disgrace, and debt, drowned in wild intemperance ; the old sad story of a life wrecked, a mind ruined, a father bowed with ceaseless, unavailing sorrow, and calling aloud when he thought none were hearing him, "O my son Absalom !

my son, my son Absalom ! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son ! "

But it is not only the victims who are absolutely crushed and maimed for whom I plead. I believe that more than half the sins which are committed in this country are done under the exciting and narcotizing influence of strong drink. The mind may, in its sober moments, have been struggling gallantly by the grace of God against some evil impulse. But the lower nature has not been completely subdued ; it knows that its time is coming ; it secretly and hopefully waits its opportunity. The man goes to some entertainment, or at his own table he treats himself to what produces in him an unnatural condition of enlivenment. He is elevated to a state of unreasoning complacency and unreflecting buoyancy which is wholly artificial. This is that for which his lower nature was on the watch. The feelings which now inflate his soul are far indeed from being the influence of the Holy Spirit ; they are the senseless impulses of folly and evil. The lower nature has for the time gained the complete mastery. For the time the struggle between good and evil is over. That second self, the earthly man, the continued existence of which St. Paul so bitterly deplored, for the time represents the whole character and being of the individual. He rubs his hands, he chuckles with delight that drink has set him free from the control of the Spirit of God. He only needs a tempter, a guide, an opportunity, and he is ready for any sin or folly. It is very certain that the hosts of evil, who are ever on the look-out for our fall from wisdom and goodness, will provide that tempter, that guide, that opportunity. The evil will be done, the folly will be perpetrated, and

the unhappy fool will awake from his dream of phantasy to find himself lowered in self-respect, embittered in memory, and seared in conscience.

My brothers, the thing that above all others I wish to see is that every parish throughout the length and breadth of the country should have its own branch of the great society which, during the last quarter of a century, has banded together some of the best forces of the National Church against the overwhelming stress of this ubiquitous, insidious and truly devilish temptation. If any poor words of mine should overcome any hesitation that there may be in the hearts of my brothers the clergy of the country parishes, I should thank God from the bottom of my heart for being permitted to speak here this day.

Do you say that the National Church herself is, by her vows, her prayers, and her homilies, the best temperance association?—I would remind you that special dangers have always aroused special efforts to provide means for meeting their assaults. Do you say that in the villages you know the few habitual drunkards, and that the rest of the people are fairly sober?—Ah! but you forget how the rural population in these days moves from place to place, how the labourers are tending to migrate to the great towns, what crowds of the best young men and women go to London and other great centres of employment, and how urgent it is that they should be specially strengthened and forearmed against the cruel, strong enticements to which they will immediately become subject. Do you say that to you the arguments of some of the more enthusiastic total abstainers appear exaggerated, unreasonable and repellent?—May I not

press on your observation that the strength of the temperance organization of the National Church lies in its vast preventive and remedial measures into which we, who do not see our way to the absolute rejection of these drinks, may throw all our strength? Or do you object that you have not seen any decided or marked result from the work of the branches of the society which have come under your notice?—May I not ask you to believe those who have seen the tone of a whole neighbourhood improved, and who have the willing and impartial testimony of the police to the fact? Is it not true that multitudes of drunkards have been reclaimed? Can we always measure the work of the Spirit of God? Are the obvious results in the Army, the Navy, among the fishermen, among the cabmen and other sections of the community illusory? Is it not well that everyone of the children in our schools should be fairly and intelligently grounded in the principles of temperance and in the knowledge of the calamities of intoxication before they go out into the world to fight singlehanded the battle of life? Is it not true that our brothers the Nonconformists, who know their people so well, and who work amongst them with such sympathy and skill, are, in this matter of giving the children a prepossession in favour of temperance, most earnest, most energetic, most successful? Is it well that we should leave the field entirely to their efforts, while we ourselves, being heartily members of the National Church, desire to bring up all her sons and daughters in loyal appreciation of the activity and universality of her ministrations? Will it not require the united aid of every single parish in the kingdom if we are ever to stir the force of public

opinion to extinguish that most disastrous practice of women drinking? Oh, my brothers, we of the towns look earnestly to you of the country, who are constantly replenishing our populations, to send us new armies of wholesome, well-principled men and women, youths and maidens, strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, who shall turn the fortune of the battle in our never-ceasing crusade!

My brothers, the appeal comes to you, in your happy, quiet, country rectories, from no band of ill-judging fanatics, but founded on the solemn and sober judgment of the most responsible men in the Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury declares that of this entirely overwhelming necessity, that the Church should contest the ground with intemperance, there can be no manner of doubt. It is in one way the work of the present day for Christ, for unless it is done very little can be lastingly done. Your own beloved bishop * solemnly asseverates that the evil is one which seriously affects the happiness and welfare of the nation, and there is scarcely anything that acts as a greater hindrance to the spiritual work that God has committed to His Church than the prevalence of this terrible sin. The late Bishop of Norwich † asserted that he was speaking after much reflection, and as in the presence of God: he was fully persuaded that temperance associations will be found to be the great regenerators of society. The Dean of Norwich‡ urges that in every school in the country there should be a Band of Hope, and in every well-worked parish a temperance association. The Archdeacon of Norwich§ adds his

* Dr. Pelham. † Dr. Stanley. ‡ Dr. Lefroy.
§ Archdeacon Perowne.

testimony that on this gigantic evil the Church must concentrate her forces, and combine her strength, if she is successfully to grapple with it; and it is the combination of strength and force which constitutes the great value of our society. The Archdeacon of Suffolk,* to the same effect, urges that there needs a great uprising of conscience on the subject of intemperance, which is such a terrible blot on our civilisation and on our Christianity; that the time has come when the Church should take up the business of temperance as an essential part of her work; that the Church of England Temperance Society is the organization by which she should address herself to this enterprise, for it has received a consensus of authority such as, perhaps, never met together on any one subject; it proceeds on Church lines, recognises Church order, and is accredited both by bishops and Convocation. The Bishop of Winchester † pronounces that temperance work is at the root of all moral and religious reform. The Bishop of Marlborough,‡ who had long experience both of the seafaring population of Plymouth and of the agricultural peasants of Devonshire, does not think any parish rightly worked which has not a Band of Hope distinctly under the control of the clergy; he feels very strongly that the time has come when the Church of England must of necessity take up the promotion of temperance as an essential part of the duty of the Church of the Incarnation. And the Bishop of the neighbouring diocese of Peterborough § used words which I would venture, if I could, to bring before every clergyman in the country—that they would

* Archdeacon Gibson. † Dr. Thorold.
‡ Dr. Earle. § Dr. Creighton.

never rest content until the society sees a branch in every parish in the diocese, and that he wished to express his own very fervent desire that that time might not be very far off. He thought that the usefulness of such an association in every parish was this, that there was no cause that more readily excites enthusiasm, or gathers zeal around it so quickly. Any parish minister who wished to find employment for the better part of the more serious amongst his people would be sure to find it in this cause more readily than in any other that he could take up.

"Where is Abel thy brother?" Friends, there are in the United Kingdom some four millions of registered total abstainers who have, either for their own sakes or for the sake of the weaker members of Christ's flock, denied themselves these drinks, and probably a million more who do not belong to any society. There are more than twenty thousand temperance centres, there are more than ten thousand weekly meetings held to keep up the courage of the tempted and the zeal of the crusaders. What have you done yourselves? What are the officers of the garrison here doing for their men?

Oh, my brothers, by the greatness of the necessity, by the authorities of the Church, in the name of that patriotic love for your country which I know you feel, for the honour of that great National Church of which you are the ministers, by the fate here and hereafter of the six hundred thousand habitual English drunkards, by the sins hourly committed through reckless artificial exhilaration, by the one hundred and twenty thousand annual premature deaths through drink, by the ghastly horrors of the daily records of the

police-courts, by the shame of flaring gin-shops full of women and children, by the bright hopeful faces of the innocent lads and maids whom you send up from your pleasant pastures to the vile life of a modern English city, by the incalculable misery of the drunkard's home, by the awful tragedy of the sorrows of the tens of thousands of children who have a drinking mother; in the name of the vast host of men whom you employ in the liquor traffic, many of whom abhor it and would give anything to be free from its tyranny and its snares; by the blessing which God has given to our work in the last quarter of a century, by the surprising and inestimable success of our police-court missions, by the divine encouragement of the policy of working specially for different sections of our people, for the sake of our dear and noble brothers the mechanics, artisans, and labourers of England, who are now the most important and influential part of our fellow-subjects; above all, for the sake of Him who has bought us with His own blood, and who calls on us to make any sacrifice that will enable us to present to Him, cleansed and in their right minds, the souls with whom He has entrusted us—I appeal to you this day not to let this opportunity slip away into the realm of oblivion, but to show for this great, wise, growing machinery of your Church, your understanding, your sympathy, and your zeal!

SELF-EXAMINATION.

"Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord."
Lamentations iii. 40.

Preached at the Chapel Royal, St James's, February 21st, 1890.

SELF-EXAMINATION.

ONE of the most obvious evils of living in an age of great material comfort and of a racing speed of occupation is that there is so little inclination or opportunity for the great and primary Christian duty of self-examination. In these days, especially in the busy life of a vast metropolis, from the moment you wake till the very last space that you can spare before you release your weary mind once more to its nightly rest, there is enough to engross all your thoughts and energies. Even to study in any useful degree the great mass of interests, controversies, and events which are presented to you, when you begin the morning, in your daily newspaper, to follow up what is new with sufficient inquiries, to balance truth and falsehood, to weigh the grounds for making up your own opinion, and to determine what is worth remembering, what should be dismissed as unimportant and trifling, would cost you so much recourse to books of reference, so much deliberation, comparison, and meditation, that you would have time for little else. This you do not do; you have the daily duties of your calling in life, which take up the bulk of your time, and you fill up the vacant spaces with the newspaper, books, and conversation. Even when you are walking to your place of business,

or returning from it, there is so much to attract your notice as you pass along that consecutive thought is almost impossible. In the evening you are weary, or you are dining, or you are busy amusing yourself, or you are excited, or you are conversing with your friends; the probability is that, unless, by God's grace, you have disciplined yourself very carefully, your mind habitually shrinks from the effort of looking into itself, recalling the thoughts and emotions of the day, comparing them with the revealed will of God and the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, and from the struggle of definitely determining itself to repentance and amendment on each several point. Nothing is easier, in all matters where you are your own master, than postponing indefinitely what is not for the moment agreeable. Thus the duty of self-examination is in many cases never performed at all. And what is the result of that?

Why, certainly you cannot grow in grace if you never seriously ask God's help to practise what is one of His directions for the welfare of your soul; and the probability is that, as you do not improve in your personal character, you go backward; bad habits are indulged without check, duties neglected, the cultivation of the Christian graces abandoned, temptations met without a struggle, every un-Christian temper allowed its own way, until, although there is still a general adherence to the religion of Christ in the abstract, it has little share in the direction of the life and the formation of character. How else can we explain the malignity of misrepresentation, the paltry selfishness, the miserable party spirit, the wretched ambitions which meet us every day in Parliamentary

life? How else can we account for the tricks and subterfuges which too often disgrace our Christian commerce and trade? What other explanation is there for the self-indulgence of so many of those who are entrusted with the good things of life, and their apathy alike to public spirit and to the distresses of those who are born to poverty? What other reason can we give for the fact that hundreds and thousands of our working people, brought up to some extent in the fear of God, and in the knowledge of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, seem to lapse naturally into indifference and throw off all thought of conscience and of religion? Alas! in what other way can we analyze the inconsistencies of our own lives?

But nobody can dare to say that this duty of self-examination is an artificial counsel of perfection added to the Christian life by the leaders of some modern movement like the Evangelical revival or the mediæval reaction. It is an essential necessity in some form or other of even natural religion. Pythagoras was a Greek philosopher and moralist, who was born nearly six hundred years before Christ. Listen to what he says about it: "Let not sleep fall upon thine eyes till thou hast thrice examined the transactions of the past day. Where have I turned aside from rectitude? What have I been doing? What have I left undone which I ought to have done? Begin thus from the first act, and proceed; and, in conclusion, at the ill which thou hast done be troubled, and rejoice for the good." Confucius the Chinese was born about fifty years after Pythagoras the Greek; and from the other end of the world we get the same advice: "A man should examine himself not only as to what he has done.

but also as to what he has not done." Phocion, again, was an Athenian statesman and general, born fifty years after Confucius; he was illustrious no less for his virtues than for his brilliant talents and victories. One of his sayings would be an excellent motto for many a modern orator: "If the people praise us, we should examine ourselves the more." Mencius was another great Chinese philosopher, who was born about one hundred years after Phocion. "There is no greater delight," said Mencius, "than to be conscious of sincerity on self-examination." Seneca was an illustrious Roman philosopher and moralist, born in Spain the same year as our Lord, but educated at Rome, and he held the same view: "Every man should examine into his own life"; that was one of his maxims.

Moses appeals to the power of inward reflection which ought to be diligently cultivated: "Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" King David, to whom the people of Israel owed their great advance in spiritual religion, had many such thoughts in his Psalms: "Stand in awe and sin not; commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still." And again: "Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart." And again: "Thou hast proved my heart; Thou hast visited me in the night; Thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing; I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress." And the beautiful psalmist Asaph: "I call to remembrance my song in the night; I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search." And again the young captive poet of the exquisite 119th Psalm: "I thought on my ways and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies."

Jeremiah warned his contemporaries against the fatal ease of self-deception: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" And in the midst of all the sorrows and calamities of his country, he reminds them of the true remedy: "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord."

Our Lord's teaching was full of appeals to sincerity and self-knowledge. The prodigal son was an example of that looking inward which must be one of the necessary steps in the reformation of each of us. When he came to himself he said: "How many hired servants of my father have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son!" And St. Paul insists on this as a useful preparation for the exercise of our highest privileges, when we wish to approach nearest to God: "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." "If we would judge ourselves," he says, "we should not be judged." And again: "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." And again, in another place, to the Galatians: "If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man test his own work, and then shall he have his ground of rejoicing in himself alone, and not in that which belongs to another." And St. John, in his first epistle, points to self-examination as a motive for wholesome fear and for well-grounded encouragement: "If our heart con-

demn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God; and whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in His sight." Lastly, to the self-deceiving Church of the Laodiceans, the very type of so much of the Christianity of our own day, St. John writes this terrible warning: "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve that thou mayest see."

I say, then, that the neglect of this divine command is the source of much of our troubles in life and of our incompleteness as Christians. I say, further, that if we have too much to do, it is our own fault. We are bound not to undertake any duties which will hinder us from quiet contemplation, seasons of restful thought, the daily summoning to the bar of our conscience of what we have done and thought. To many, pencil and paper will help this necessary practice. But when once the habit is formed, and scrupulously kept up, conscience will be quick to remember and remind. And if we ask according to what standard are we to conduct our self-examination, the answer is most plain: "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in nowise enter therein." The time when our faith was simplest, when our acceptance of the word of God was most direct, when

we were most under our mother's influence—that was the best time with us. The more we can, by God's infinite pity and grace, in spite of our wilfulness and wandering and worldliness, and acquaintance with evil, recover of that spirit, that blessed simplicity, that calm unquestioning trustfulness, the better it will be for us here and hereafter.

Whenever we meet a man who is inflated with a sense of his own importance, or whenever we ourselves are put out by the idea that we are not receiving our due at the hands of the world, it is a sure sign of lack of grace. Self-examination must have been neglected. Those who know themselves will be the last to be exacting about their rights and dues and privileges. When the great Duke of Condé was in poverty and retirement, and was one day noticed and pitied by a lord of Italy, who, out of tenderness for his misfortunes, wished him to take better care of himself, the good duke answered: "Sir, be not troubled, and think not that I am ill provided of conveniences; for I send a messenger before me, who makes ready my lodgings, and takes care that I be royally entertained." The lord asked him who was his messenger. "The knowledge of myself," he replied, "and the thoughts of what I deserve for my sins, which is eternal torments; and when, with this knowledge, I arrive at my lodging, how unprovided soever I find it, methinks it is better than I deserve; and as the sense of sin which merits hell sweetens present difficulties, so do the hopes of the heavenly kingdom."

The quiet season of retirement and self-recollection has once more come to offer us its benignant gifts. It is a season which to all should be of the deepest

solemnity. It is a season which God's mercy fashions for bringing you nearer to Him. If you have slighted this duty before, there can be no difficulty, will you but ask the help of the Holy Spirit, in fixing your minds on your own characters and conduct during this time of refreshment, when the world draws back for a while. You may find much to disappoint and surprise. But if God be with you, you will also discover ground for hope and encouragement.

"By all means use some time to be alone.
Salute thyself: see what thy soul doth wear.
Dare to look in thy chest, for 'tis thine own;
And tumble up and down what thou find'st there.
Who cannot rest till he *good fellows* find,
He breaks up houses, turns out-doors his mind.

"Sum up by night what thou hast done by day,
And in the morning what thou hast to do.
Dress and undress thy soul; mark the decay
And growth of it: if, with thy watch, that too
Be down, then wind up both; since we shall be
Most *surely* judged, make thy accounts agree."

"Search me, O God, and know my heart:
Try me and know my thoughts:
And see if there be any wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting."

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